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CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 189

EDITORIALS:

THE WAR GOES ON 191
THE DEPORTATION MENACE 192
T. C. AND *The Nation* 193
PIUS XI 194

NEW DEAL, NEW LIFE by Keith Hutchison 195

BRITAIN WINS IN SPAIN by Gaetano Salvemini 197

ARMS-MAKERS' HOLIDAY by Frank C. Hanighen 199

THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL SECURITY by Maxwell S. Stewart 201

POCKET GUIDE by Helen Woodward 203

IN THE WIND 204

ISSUES AND MEN by Oswald Garrison Villard 205

BOOKS AND THE ARTS:

IN TIME OF HESITATION by Constance Rourke 206
TRAGEDY IN MINNESOTA by Louis B. Salomon 208
LIBERAL ENGLAND by Hans Kohn 208
BIOGRAPHY OF BERLIOZ by Jacques Barzun 210
ADVENTURE IN AWARENESS by Babette Deutsch 210
DRAMA: WOE TO ISRAEL! by Joseph Wood Krutch 212
FILMS by Franz Hoellering 213

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The Shape of Things

IN OCCUPYING THE ISLAND OF HAINAN, Japan has shown a contemptuous disregard for French and British warnings of military retaliation. France's failure to take steps to protect its frontier when Italian troops were advancing toward the Pyrenees apparently convinced the Japanese that France would not fight under any circumstances to safeguard what after all is merely the approach to a colony. And once more they have guessed correctly. Although both Great Britain and France have filed "vigorous" protests against Japan's action, neither has shown any disposition to carry the matter farther. While the appeasement policies of the democracies have given Japan a free hand for expansion to the south and west, it has apparently struck a cropper in the north. A series of new incidents, in which the Japanese seem to have come out second best, has broken out along the Soviet border. With the Japanese government now completely in the hands of extremists, the reports of an impending attack on the Soviet Far East cannot be disregarded even though such action would be suicidal. War has threatened every spring for the past seven years in this area, but with 600,000 of Japan's best troops on the Soviet border, the threat is now graver than ever.

THE RESIGNATION OF JUSTICE BRANDEIS will be mourned by everyone who realizes that the Supreme Court is in the last analysis only the sum of its members. It is a pillar of human liberty or a drag on progress according to the light and leading of the men who make it up. By losing the shining liberal influence of Louis D. Brandeis the court will be greatly the poorer. But his retirement is a challenge that no President could fail to meet; Mr. Roosevelt's most recent judicial appointments have been such as to give us confidence that he will select a successor worthy of the great jurist who is leaving.

IN REJECTING THE PRESIDENT'S NOMINATION of Judge Floyd H. Roberts purely on the ground that he is "personally obnoxious" to its Virginia delegation, the Senate has taken a very dangerous stand. At a time when

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the fitness of some federal judges is under inquiry, it is of especial importance that appointments to the bench should be based strictly on merit. In the present case the Senate entirely neglected that issue. Actually the President's claims for Judge Roberts's ability and integrity seem fully justified. Certainly Senators Glass and Byrd made no attempts to impugn them. Instead, alleging that the nomination was made to annoy them and please a rival faction of Virginia Democrats, they appealed to an unwritten law of senatorial courtesy which calls for the rejection of a nominee on the request of the Senators from his state. One may doubt the strategic wisdom of the Roberts appointment, but one cannot defend the Senate's rejection of it. This particular unwritten law is nothing more than a dubious system of controlling local patronage. Not all of Mr. Roosevelt's judicial appointments have been entirely worthy, but at least his record compares favorably with that of recent Presidents. His latest nominations show a real effort to strengthen the bench. Francis Biddle of Pennsylvania, Professor Herschel W. Arant of Ohio, and Robert P. Patterson of New York, all are noted for their learning and probity. In naming the first two, Mr. Roosevelt overrode the recommendations not of New Deal opponents but of warm supporters.

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THE SENATE HAS ALSO BEEN INQUIRING INTO the qualifications of T. R. Amlie for membership on the Interstate Commerce Commission, and with all the zeal that was so conspicuously lacking in its consideration of Judge Roberts. A queue of hostile witnesses crowded the hearings urging Amlie's rejection on the ground they did not like his views. Meanwhile, a large part of the press has been conducting a public trial of the nominee on charges ranging from possession of "an unjudicial mind" to belief in communism. The *Wall Street Journal,* which presses the former accusation, admits that Mr. Amlie's character is unassailable. It opposes his appointment, however, because it feels that the ICC, as a "quasi-judicial body," is no place for "extremists" of the "left" or, it adds graciously, even of the "right." We should be more impressed by this argument if we could remember any occasion when the *Wall Street Journal* employed it in opposing the appointment of an extreme reactionary. Other papers insist that belief in socialism is sufficient disqualification for membership in a body regulating a privately owned industry. Our own opinion is that Mr. Amlie's lack of orthodoxy is perhaps his best recommendation. One Socialist in a commission of eleven is not going to result in a revolution, but a fresh point of view can make a valuable contribution to its deliberations. In Britain the Socialist opposition is frequently represented on similar bodies. If Mr. Chamberlain can appoint a disbeliever in capitalism without qualms, we do not see why Mr. Roosevelt should be denied the privilege.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT HAS LOST NO TIME in thrusting back at Congress the problem of adequate provision for work relief during the remainder of the fiscal year. Immediately after signing the resolution appropriating $725,000,000 for this purpose, he sent a message asking for an additional $150,000,000 to bring the amount available back to his original figure. Leaders of the Congress economy bloc are annoyed, but they have no reason to feel surprised. In an attempt to hedge, after receiving a tremendous volume of protests against the cut, they tacked on an amendment to the appropriation resolution inviting the President to ask for more. They claim now that the emergency against which they thus provided has not yet arisen and that Mr. Roosevelt might at least have waited a few weeks before starting to bully them again. The message, however, shows conclusively that unless the additional money becomes available, WPA rolls will have to be reduced by at least 1,500,000, or to half their present total, in the three months ending June 30. Considering the slow pace at which private enterprise is absorbing the unemployed, it is no exaggeration to claim that an emergency will arise on April 1. To turn such vast numbers suddenly over to local relief will put a crushing burden on state and municipal authorities and cause tremendous distress. Early action is essential since the WPA must be given time to adjust its complicated machinery. Insistence on the cut will hinder recovery and cause untold misery. The humane, the economically wise course is to accede to the President's request. We suspect it would also be good politics.

✶

OUR CONTROVERSY WITH WALTER WINCHELL is growing like Jack's house. First Mr. Winchell accused us of checking and learning—and then not admitting—that our "recent blast" at Ambassador Kennedy "was 100 per cent wrong." We published a polite contradiction. "*The Nation's* dispatch," we said, "describing Ambassador Kennedy's apathetic attitude toward the refugee problem was written by an experienced correspondent who had every opportunity to know the facts. And the facts as he gave them have never been refuted." Mr. Winchell reprinted our reply and then asserted that it was "also true beyond dispute and capable of complete verification that friends of *The Nation* who doubted the accuracy of the article . . . made it their business to get the facts in London. . . . They have learned that Mr. Kennedy has been both active and effective in securing the cooperation of the British government for help for the German refugees and has brought to bear both the influence of the United States government and the force of his own personality upon the British government to this end. Furthermore, Mr. Rublee has also publicly denied accuracy of the article in *The Nation.* . . . Now will *The Nation* reprint that?"

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OF COURSE WE'LL REPRINT IT. WE SHALL ALSO answer it. First, just as a matter of interest, we'd like to know whether the sophisticated Mr. Winchell thinks that an official in Mr. Rublee's position could do other than deny the accuracy of criticism of the American Ambassador. He should never have been asked. Second, we'd like to point out these facts: The article in *The Nation* criticized Mr. Kennedy specifically for his conduct—or nonconduct—before the pogroms of November; they waked up a good many people to the full horror of the situation. "Friends of *The Nation*" to whom Mr. Kennedy protested did submit the story to another London correspondent, and he sent them a version that exonerated the Ambassador—and, incidentally, criticized Mr. Rublee in the same connection. Our "friends" showed us this letter, stipulating that it could not be printed or its author's name revealed. We questioned our own correspondent. He stuck by his story and still does. He is a man of absolute integrity and long years of experience. Does Mr. Winchell think that *The Nation* should have repudiated him on the basis of a different version in a private letter? We suggest that Mr. Winchell reprint this comment and tell us he is sorry he accused us of affirming our belief in a story we knew to be false. For our part, we'll keep an eye on Mr. Kennedy—who has undoubtedly been more "active and effective" since November 10—and give him full credit for future deeds. How's that?

*

THE NATION HAS FREQUENTLY URGED THAT this country should follow the example of Britain and Holland by making special provision for the admission of refugee children. This proposal now seems to have a good chance of adoption with the introduction into the Senate, by Senator Robert F. Wagner, of a resolution asking that 20,000 refugees under fourteen, of "every race and creed," be allowed entry outside the quota during the next two years. We warmly congratulate Senator Wagner on this step and also the executives of the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. on their indorsement of the plan. There can surely be no responsible opposition to a project which leaves the immigration law untouched so far as adults are concerned, puts no charge on the public funds, and offers innocent victims of persecution a chance to grow up in a free and friendly atmosphere. It is unfortunate that the President's Advisory Committee on Refugees, headed by J. G. MacDonald, has not yet publicly put the stamp of its approval on this plan.

*

BOMBINGS AND INCENDIARISM ATTRIBUTED to the extreme Irish Republicans are continuing in England and northern Ireland despite extraordinary police activity. On the old theory that "England's danger is Ireland's opportunity," efforts are being made to disrupt rearmament work and sabotage A. R. P. (Air-Raid Precaution) activities. The end in view is to force withdrawal of British support from Ulster, thus making possible the union of all Eire. An ultimatum presenting this demand is said to have been sent to London by the Irish Republican Army, and threats have also been made against the government of Eire. Whatever provocation southern Republicans may have had from the Northern Ireland government—and its record in the suppression of constitutional rights is a disgrace—they will not achieve their objectives by terroristic methods. Such tactics will only destroy the growing fund of good-will between English and Irish. Most people in Eire, strongly though they resent continued partition, seem to be opposed to this revival of Fenianism. Mr. de Valera, whom no one can accuse of subservience to England, has condemned it in the strongest possible terms. His government has introduced legislation into the Dail for the stringent suppression of terrorism and treason. The lawfully elected government of Eire, it insists, will not tolerate any attempt to set up a secret and rival regime.

*

WALT DISNEY, WHO HAS THE DISTINCTION of having brought forth from the Hollywood mountain a Mickey Mouse, is Harvard's most famous M. A., but Harvard has apparently been rankling under the honor. Dr. Robert Durant Feild, who was responsible for the award, has just been dropped from the faculty of fine arts on the recommendation of a committee of members of that department. The Harvard *Crimson* asserts that the Disney incident was the immediate reason, though Dr. Feild's general approach to art, which made his classes so popular that not all applicants could be accommodated, was a more fundamental cause. The *Crimson* says that hundreds of protests have been received, and it is reported that both students and teachers at Harvard are organizing. We look forward to a good fight. The spectacle of Harvard defending its dignity against a Mouse should be almost as funny as an animated cartoon; it should inspire Mr. Disney to send Donald Duck and all his other extra-curricular animals to Cambridge.

The War Goes On

DESPITE the loss of Catalonia and the island of Minorca, it seems probable as we go to press that the Spanish civil war will continue. Rumors of an early end of the conflict have flown thick during the past week, most of them originating, suspiciously enough, in Paris. Yet it seems unlikely that the government will surrender its heavily fortified stronghold in central Spain unless it is assured that its minimum terms will be met. It has a well-disciplined army of from four to five hundred thousand men. And though it

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lacks supplies and the industrial base for manufacturing its own armaments, this could be rectified if the United States or one of the other democracies would lift the ban which has existed since almost the beginning of the conflict and allow the government to buy the needed munitions.

At the moment, however, it appears that France, slated to be the next victim of the fascist onslaught, has suffered greater demoralization as a result of the loss of Catalonia than Spain itself. Not the slightest effort was made to prevent Franco from occupying the strategic mountain passes along the French border. In contrast with the policies adopted after the fall of Irun, the French flatly refused to permit the Spanish army to be transported with its arms to another sector of Republican Spain. If Daladier hoped that his appeasement policy would conciliate Mussolini and thus enable France to escape further humiliations, he miscalculated seriously. The abuse of France in the Italian press has continued unabated; and Mussolini's new rearmament program was announced the same day that Bonnet warned the Spanish government that it could not operate from French soil.

If France's role this past week has been cowardly and shortsighted, Great Britain's has been crassly opportunistic and unscrupulous. Publicly Chamberlain finds it convenient to believe that the Italians will be withdrawn from Spain as soon as Franco's victory is complete. But his action in arranging for the seizure of Minorca by Franco's Spanish troops suggests that with all his protestations he has not succeeded in convincing himself that Mussolini will keep his word. The British Prime Minister has abandoned even the appearance of neutrality in the Spanish civil war, and is staking everything on the hope that he can convince Franco that Britain's financial power will be more advantageous to him in the months to come than Italian military support. His strategy is painfully obvious: to persuade Mussolini to withdraw his troops as a gesture of good-will to England, and then to bribe Franco to drop his link to the axis. Unfortunately for Chamberlain, Italy was prepared for just such a move and announced that its troops would not be withdrawn until a fascist "political" victory was secure. Unmoved by this development, Chamberlain has virtually served notice of his intention to recognize Franco even without a withdrawal of Italian troops.

Nor is the prospect of immediate American help for Spain much brighter. In response to prodding by the Lawyers' Committee on American Relations with Spain, the State Department has receded from its contention that the President has not the power to lift the embargo, but now says that since Congress is in session it should deal with the situation. Congress has been far more concerned with its own partisan purposes than with the larger issues of foreign policy on which democracy may stand or fall.

It is not too late for action. Spain fights on. It is still possible to preserve an island of democracy in Europe if we will but grant Spain the rights to which it is entitled as a sovereign nation. But this will not be done unless the President displays new understanding and courage.

The Deportation Menace

IF ANY fault is to be found with the impressive and eloquent statement made by Secretary of Labor Perkins before the House Judiciary Committee in the Bridges case, it lies in the defensive position she adopted. For on every one of the basic issues involved the men and interests who have so long urged the deportation of Harry Bridges and now seek the impeachment of the Secretary convict themselves of the grossest hypocrisy. Bridges entered this country legally on April 12, 1920; the suggestion to deport him did not come until 1934, and it came not because of any crime or illegal act but because he had played a leading role in the San Francisco longshoremen's strike in that year. Congressman Dies himself last August could produce no more tangible evidence against him than the assertions of two or three persons that in private conversation he had made derogatory statements with regard to battleships, threatening and intemperate remarks with respect to rival union factions, and contemptuous remarks about the President. The last is a curious accusation to come from Dies.

The Secretary of Labor could undoubtedly have ordered Bridges deported months ago, even on the flimsy and spurious charges brought against him. For, as Miss Perkins pointed out, the Secretary under the deportation laws has what is "in many respects the most serious and the most drastic administrative power vested in any executive officer in our government" and "stands virtually alone among executive officers in his right to restrict personal liberty and freedom of individual action of human beings." The Secretary can in certain circumstances arrest, even where there is no allegation of crime; imprison and deport, even though the Secretary recognizes that deportation may be "tantamount to sending an alien to his death." The Secretary is "investigator, prosecutor, jury, and judge." Whereas other administrative officers cannot enforce an order without resort to the courts, in deportation "no court tries the cases or can intervene except on habeas corpus, and then can only review the point of law involved, not the finding of fact." This is a power, as Miss Perkins said, "which is susceptible of exercise without adherence to those elementary standards of due process of law that are at the heart of our Constitution." Yet the same interests and newspapers which are continually talking of due process and constitutional procedure and complaining that administrative agencies combine the functions of prosecutor and

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judge are now trying to impeach Miss Perkins for refusing to handle the Bridges case in an arbitrary and high-handed manner.

Particularly hard to stomach is the criticism of Miss Perkins for awaiting the Supreme Court's decision in the Strecker case before proceeding with the deportation charges against Bridges. In the past and under other circumstances, those who would have her ignore orderly judicial procedure have always preached the virtue of respect for the courts. In the Strecker case the United States Circuit Court of Appeals at New Orleans refused to order the deportation of a fifty-three-year-old restaurant owner of Hot Springs, Arkansas, whose only crime seems to be that in 1932 he made a donation of 60 cents at a meeting of the Communist Party, and signed up as a member. Strecker had lived in this country for twenty-six years and had already left the party at the time of his arrest. He had his first citizenship papers and had applied for his second. He was found guilty of having been a member of the Communist Party in 1932 and ordered deported. The court, speaking through Judge Hutcheson, reversed the order and found it "a kind of Pecksniffian righteousness" to hold that because a man is a member of the Communist Party he is therefore deportable as one who advocates overthrow of the government by force and violence. If the Supreme Court upholds the Circuit Court, mere membership in the Communist Party will not be sufficient ground for deportation. And if the Supreme Court declines to order the deportation of Strecker, who admits having been affiliated with the party, it will be impossible to deport Bridges even if it can be proved that he is a member, which he denies.

But a favorable decision in the Supreme Court is not enough. We believe that all those who wish to safeguard democracy in this country must fight for the repeal of laws which permit deportation because of a man's opinions only. "If Bridges or any other alien," as Miss Perkins said, "at any time takes any action to overthrow the government of the United States by force or by violence, or if he commits any crimes, he can and will be promptly arrested, tried, and punished, or deported under the terms and requirements of law." But to permit deportation for opinion alone is to allow immigration officials to violate basic rights and suppress fundamental liberties. In the Miller case these powers were used against freedom of the press; in the Baer case, to punish the author of a sewage-disposal plan fought by industrial and lumber interests in Oregon; in the Warrmann case, against the right of assembly. At the time of the Palmer raids, as in the raids made in recent years by immigration authorities during the waterfront strike in San Francisco and the miners' strike in Gallup, New Mexico, the great majority of those arrested were American citizens. Aside from the bad habits bred in officialdom, the deportation laws are a menace to the citizen as well as the alien.

T. C. and "The Nation"

AFTER the publication last December of an article by James Wechsler entitled Twilight at Teachers College, *The Nation* received and printed a sharp but rather vague dissent from certain members of the faculty. Mr. Wechsler's article was a criticism of the Teachers College administration, and especially of Dean William F. Russell, for catering to the views of business interests and for systematically disregarding democratic procedure within the college. The letter of protest, which was signed by several well-known liberal educators, charged that Mr. Wechsler and *The Nation* were being used by a "political sect," meaning obviously the "Stalinists" in the Teachers' Union, to injure a liberal institution. Subsequently several of the signers opened a concerted bombardment in the press against the Teachers' Union, blaming the union for the *Nation* article and presumably "answering" that article by attacking the union—although the article itself had only parenthetically mentioned the union.

Dr. George S. Counts, one of those who signed the letter to *The Nation,* has now examined more of the real substance of Mr. Wechsler's article in a long rebuttal in the *Social Frontier.* He renews his unproved and untrue charges against *The Nation.* He also paints an amiable portrait of Dean Russell, for whom he displays genuine sympathy. In the course of his argument he contributes at least two points which Mr. Wechsler might profitably have noted: first, the appointment of several liberals to the faculty in recent years; second, the fact that Dean Russell had inherited a tradition of undemocratic procedure from his predecessors. Both items are part of a complete record and emphasize the complexity of the situation. They do not alter the effect of the negative testimony presented by Mr. Wechsler and largely confirmed—with numerous but rather unconvincing qualifications—by Dr. Counts himself. A large part of Dr. Counts's thesis rests upon a misreading of the *Nation* article. He defends Dean Russell against the charge that New College was closed because of its radicalism; Mr. Wechsler did not say that it was, but stressed the lack of democracy in the manner of its closing. Dr. Counts cites the enlightened character of Teachers College's present labor policy, as Mr. Wechsler also did; but he admits somewhat light-heartedly that the new policy was adopted only after faculty pressure, with Dean Russell "characteristically protesting all the while." Dr. Counts denies once more that several of his colleagues left the Teachers' Union under administrative duress; Mr. Wechsler merely mentioned the resignations as part of a general decline in "progressive activities" and added, "The extent to which insecurity motivates this retreat and the extent to which it reflects broader world tendencies is difficult to measure."

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Although he arrives at different conclusions, Dr. Counts, in the process, fortifies Mr. Wechsler's chief theme: Dean Russell's bid for the good-will of big business, and his autocratic conduct of the college itself. Dr. Counts grants that there is "certainly truth" in the picture of Dean Russell's flirtation with Wall Street, and expresses "deep anxiety" over the formation of a Lay Council of still uncertain composition. With respect to internal democracy, he admits that "if the events to which Mr. Wechsler refers are examined from the standpoint of democratic procedure, the case of the college is much less defensible." He then advances a multitude of explanations for Dean Russell on each count and reaches a verdict of acquittal. Analyzing Dean Russell's deference toward big business, Dr. Counts observes that this is an ancient custom of college presidents. It is; and the cumulative experience of endowment-supported colleges demonstrates the dangers of such a course. Dr. Counts similarly deprecates the charge of internal autocracy by insisting that conditions at Teachers College are better than they used to be. They may be; but elsewhere he confesses that only in recent years have basic social issues invaded the college. That, too, is a crisis phenomenon, and autocratic methods which existed in the relaxed pre-depression years are far more significant in a setting like the present. In this setting it is astonishing to read Dr. Counts's off-hand dismissal of Dean Russell's authoritarian habits: "If, in the last analysis, he is convinced that he must make a decision, he scorns to hide behind the screen of democratic forms." This is the essential rationale for all totalitarianism; Dr. Counts presents it as merely a disconcerting facet of the Dean's personality. It is the rationale for the suppression of a dissident student newspaper, for the closing of New College without faculty consultation, for a sweeping reorganization of the college without faculty approval, for dismissal of a professor without a hearing by her colleagues, for inducing Dr. Counts himself to cancel a scheduled speech criticizing the American Legion.

Dr. Counts's vote of confidence seems all the more extravagant in the light of Dean Russell's latest address. He expressed his belief that the Communists are paying party members $3 a day to pose as students, to usurp the front rows in Teachers College classrooms, and to promote such ventures as "meetings on peace, the Spanish situation, or labor problems." He saluted the work of the Dies committee and urged its continuance.

No doubt the Communists in the Teachers' Union have a good deal to explain, and Dr. Counts and his colleagues probably have grievances to recite far more authentic than Dean Russell's colorful whimsies. But Mr. Wechsler's article did not pretend to explore the politics of the Teachers' Union. Dragging that issue across the trail only distracts attention from the real question of the character of educational policy at T. C.

Pius XI

NOT in many centuries has the passing of a Pope been as sincerely mourned in non-Catholic circles as the death of Pius XI. His courage in attacking Nazism and in criticizing the importation of German racial theories into Italian fascism had won him wide respect and applause. Yet it must be recognized, in all honesty, that the portrait of Pius XI as an anti-fascist is in part an optical illusion. History may well decide that the most important aspect of his pontificate was the aid he gave the first of the Fascist dictators, Mussolini, in his rise to power. If Mussolini's principal opponents in industrial northern Italy were the working-class parties, chief opposition in the south came from the peasants enrolled in Don Sturzo's Catholic and anti-Fascist Partito Populare. Pius XI, by disciplining Don Sturzo and adopting a hostile attitude toward his party, rendered invaluable help to the budding Duce. The "liquidation" of the Partito Populare prepared the way on the Catholic side for the Concordat of 1929. Mussolini made his contribution to the agreement by suppressing Free Masonry.

The concordat cost Mussolini 1,750,000,000 lire in indemnities, but it gave this former anti-clerical and atheist the blessing of the church. The Pope, "prisoner of the Vatican" since 1870, became in a more real sense the prisoner and hostage of Italian fascism, and the power of the Italian state, always a strong influence in the election of a new Pope, will undoubtedly be able to bring about the choice of an Italian Fascist to succeed Pius XI.

Pius XI himself, though he opposed fascist extremism, could hardly be called a man of progressive views. He always spoke in high terms of Mussolini, and his famous encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno," contains nothing inconsistent with the corporative state. Although the church, under Pius, was finally reconciled with the French Republic and lent support to republican Germany, the favor shown to the Austrian regime of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg and to Franco indicates the Vatican's basically anti-democratic preferences. Though fascism *logically* is anti-Christian, since totalitarianism cannot permit the existence of an independent church, too much can be made of this theoretical cleavage between the church and the ideology of the axis. Pius XI long hoped for some *modus vivendi* with fascism. He had a pleasant little Catholic fascism of his own in Austria. He went along for a decade with Mussolini with nothing but minor clashes. He looked to the Franco regime to save the church in Spain. Pius XI, by his concordat with the Nazis, showed his readiness to compromise with them. It was the Führer's paranoid and passionate consistency, his unwillingness permanently to compromise with Catholicism or to have a totalitarianism that was less than total, that transformed Pius XI's role into that of a world spokesman against Nazism.

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New Deal, New Life

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Washington, February 10

EVER since the elections editorial writers have been proclaiming that the New Deal is on the run. It has, they declare, lost the advantage of the offensive and faces a future of gradual disintegration ending in resounding defeat in 1940. Even some of its best friends, discerning an alarming loss of vitality, have assumed a bedside manner.

After a few days in Washington these fears seem to me a trifle premature. I have found few signs of defeatism and many of a revival of the fighting spirit. The consequences of the election are not indeed being minimized. But it has not caused demoralization; rather it has shaken the lethargy induced by six years of intensive work in a semi-revivalist atmosphere, and has led New Dealers to make a realistic assessment of their position and their future.

In the last few weeks the President and his most trusted lieutenants have been carefully weighing the political situation, reviewing their troops, calculating their assets and liabilities. The actions of the coalition of Republicans and tory Democrats since Congress convened have made it clear that the battle is joined for control of the Democratic convention of 1940. The New Dealers have no illusions about how stiff that battle will be, but they believe their chances of victory are good. In any case they must fight or see much of what has been accomplished since 1933 go into the discard.

Mr. Roosevelt got in an early blow by his appointment of Messrs. Hopkins and Murphy. It was his way of picking up the gauntlet thrown down by the Garner coterie. More than that, it was a rallying signal for his followers which, I am told, has already worked wonders in restoring morale. Men close to the President spoke of the importance of the appointments as a step toward integrating the inner circle of New Dealers into a cohesive body prepared to see the political fight through to the bitter end. Hopkins and Murphy are leading lights in this body and together with Ickes its outstanding representatives in the Cabinet. Some of the other Cabinet members, Secretaries Perkins and Morgenthau for instance, while regarded as absolutely loyal to the President, are inclined to stand aside from the political hurly-burly. My informants preferred not to identify too closely a third group or to analyze too minutely their allegiances.

Outside the Cabinet there are of course hundreds of people in Washington who might broadly be termed New Dealers. Of these a comparatively small number—heads of departments and advisers—belong to the President's fighting phalanx. The vast majority are technicians of all kinds, thoroughly devoted to the aims of the New Deal but intent on the definite work they are doing. They do not participate in politics nor are they expected to; their contribution lies in insuring that the activities of the government are carried out as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

Secretary of Commerce Hopkins

The general plan of campaign laid down by the President and his staff may be discerned in his messages to Congress. The two things most emphasized were the part the United States must play in international affairs and the importance of maintaining the spending policy until the national income is considerably increased. Mr. Roosevelt can hardly be accused of dragging foreign affairs into the foreground: Hitler has made it inevitable that a large part of our attention should be concentrated on them. But the international tension may prove to be an important domestic asset. Mr. Roosevelt is the one democratic leader who has really stood up to Hitler and Mussolini. We may not grant him an unblemished record in this respect, but against a background of Chamberlains and Daladiers he appears something of a giant. There is a growing feeling throughout the country, among all classes, that the challenge of fascism must be actively met. By making himself the spokesman of that sentiment Mr. Roosevelt will certainly add to his political strength.

There was little said in the message to Congress about new reform legislation. New Deal strategy for the next two years requires an emphasis on recovery rather than on reform. If victory is to be achieved in 1940, there must not be another economic landslide such as occurred in the second half of 1937. That débâcle was halted and a new recovery movement launched when the President took steps to make credit still easier and reverted to deficit financing. Ignoring bodeful prophecies of inflation he took the position that increased debt is less wasteful of the national heritage than idle labor and idle plant. For

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plant deteriorates even when at a standstill: the man power unemployed today is lost forever. So long as private enterprise is unwilling or unable to make use of the idle savings which are the counterpart of this idle capacity, the government must take up at least part of the slack. That was the essence of the President's budget message. He refused to reduce the deficit and made certain that if appropriations were cut the onus would rest squarely on Congress.

First round of the battle on this issue went apparently to Congress when it carried the largest cut it dared propose in the WPA deficiency appropriation. But it may prove a Pyhrric victory, for confronted by country-wide protests the Senate added an amendment inviting Oliver Twist to come back and ask for more. And Oliver has very promptly taken the hint. It remains to be seen whether the Congress majority will take responsibility for dropping a million men from the WPA rolls on April 1.

In spite of all the sound and fury about economy, New Deal strategists do not expect that in the end this year's budget will be seriously slashed. There will be many furious contests, but each time Congress really looks over the brink of the economy abyss its instinct will be to draw back, fearful lest it break its political bones. After all, in their anxiety to get back last November the Republicans incurred a good many commitments hardly compatible with balanced budgets.

While stressing the central importance of government spending in the promotion of recovery, the Administration is making greater efforts than before to persuade industry to do its share. Harry Hopkins from the moment he took over the Department of Commerce has been engaged in talks with business men designed to prove that neither he nor the President is equipped with horns and tail. According to reports, these conferences have been going more smoothly than might have been expected. The main obstacle is the tendency of business to dig in on the line "We must have confidence," and when asked what the price will be, to pitch it exorbitantly high.

The Administration apparently is prepared to make concessions. The deal with Wendell Willkie over the sale of the Tennessee Power Company to the TVA is an instance. Having established before the Supreme Court the right of the government to compete with private utilities, the Administration settled with Mr. Willkie on generous terms. Perhaps too generous. But it may be worth while if the utilities can thereby be encouraged to put through a big new investment program. The time for expansion is ripe, with power output creating new records and the magnates wondering how long, in their own interests, they can keep up the pretense that they lack the confidence to set about building new plant.

Business circles, it is interesting to note, are decidedly less hostile to the new Secretary of Commerce than are some of the politicians. They are giving him credit for ending the quarrel with Willkie and are hoping he may be open to further bargains. This hope is not without logic. With the Administration forces massed for attack on Capitol Hill, sorties against Wall Street might prove a tactical error. Better, it may be argued, to give some ground in that direction, provided a solid contribution to recovery may be had in return. Compromise is essential to the art of politics, and no politician can be blamed for resorting to it particularly when engaged in a life-and-death struggle. But compromises are bad if they are unevenly balanced and fatal when they involve the sacrifice of major principles. Friends of the New Deal will hope that Roosevelt and Hopkins in their conferences with business men will remember that Munich agreements only increase "demands for appeasement."

The President has on occasion made political swerves not even justified in terms of expediency. Playing ball with Mayor Hague did not prevent his losing New Jersey at the last elections, while it disheartened his supporters and lost him many votes elsewhere. Surrender to Catholic pressure in the matter of the Spanish embargo is another example. There can be no doubt that he himself regards the results of a Franco victory in Spain with dismay, but he could not muster the courage to tell a powerful minority that they were putting the supposed interests of their church before those of their country.

The President has important assets which can be capitalized between now and 1940, and there is no need for him to water his stock by paying undeserved bonuses to people like Hague. He still commands an immense following in the country at large and a huge majority among the rank and file of the Democratic Party. Of course when it comes to conventions political machines count more than political masses. It is rather generally assumed that in 1940 Mr. Farley and the important part of the Democratic machine which he commands will be used against any New Deal candidate. I am informed on good authority that this is by no means certain. The New Dealers do not number Farley among the deserters even though they are not sure of his support. They are convinced that he remains devoted to the President and therefore hope he can be persuaded to come into camp.

Among the chief dangers to the New Deal in the fight ahead—a danger which is not being minimized—is the growth of a spirit of intolerance, fostered, like the opposite growth of anti-fascism, by the heightened tension abroad. This spirit is being organized in Washington under the auspices of Mr. Dies. There is every reason to suspect that, whatever small fry the Dies committee may attempt to bag on the way, the quarry it is stalking is in the White House. That is why, according to the story going around, the Republicans have proposed him as an honorary member of the G. O. P.—an offer turned down on the ground that it would ruin him in Texas.

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The kind of political garbage the Dies committee is peddling has its most poisonous effects among the farmers and the lower middle classes. These are groups which the New Dealers recognize they have largely lost. They have hopes of recapturing them, but the fulfilment of that hope lies in a considerable further measure of recovery. Thus whichever way we turn in the political maze we find ourselves coming back to the economic problem. If the New Deal is to win a new lease of life in 1940 it must not only prevent another recession but hoist the national income to a considerably higher mark. Consequently, whatever strategic retreats it may make it will hold the budget salient at all costs, convinced that if the enemy can destroy that the whole line must be smashed.

Britain Wins in Spain

BY GAETANO SALVEMINI

BEFORE Hitler annexed Austria, Italy had as its neighbor at the Brenner Pass the little neutralized and disarmed Austrian republic. On May 20, 1925, Mussolini made the following statement before the Italian Senate: "Italy can never tolerate that patent violation of treaties—the annexation of Austria by Germany. This annexation, in my opinion, would negate Italian victory, besides increasing the numerical and territorial power of Germany." On October 6, 1934, he said: "We have upheld and shall continue to uphold the independence of the Austrian republic." On February 13, 1936, he proclaimed that it was necessary that "the independence and autonomy of Austria be respected." Since the annexation Italy has had on its border at the Brenner Pass the powerful German Reich. And now that Hitler has also annexed the Sudeten Germans and gained control of what remains of Czechoslovakia, Italy is confronted at the Brenner with a Reich of 85 million people. It is plain that the rape of Austria and the collapse of Czechoslovakia were for Mussolini diplomatic disasters of the first magnitude. If Mussolini attempted to shake off Hitler's yoke, an alliance between Germany and Yugoslavia would bring him quickly to his senses. Hitler would march on Venice, and Yugoslavia on Trieste. In 1938 Italy no less than France lost the World War.

To be sure, Hitler has announced, I do not know how many times, and Mussolini has repeated, I do not know how many times, that the present Italian-German frontier at the Brenner is inviolable. But if a problem did not exist in that quarter nobody would take the trouble to deny its existence.

Before the World War it was said that Italy was fated to be either an ally or an enemy of Austria. Today it is clear that Mussolini must be Hitler's enemy or his vassal. He could become his enemy only if a coalition were formed in Continental Europe among France, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Russia as the main partners. Such a coalition would oblige Hitler to scatter his forces on four frontiers and prevent him from concentrating them on the Italian frontier. But for the time being there is no prospect of such a coalition. With European international relations as they are at present, the German-Italian alliance, the so-called Rome-Berlin axis, is for Italy not a bond of alliance but a bond of vassalage.

Since its territorial ambitions in Central Europe are blocked by Hitler, Italy can now expand only at the expense of France or Great Britain in the Mediterranean. At the present time it threatens France with unofficial demands for Nice, Savoy, Corsica, and Tunisia. But it is difficult to see what it can actually get from France in the way of territory without war. And that raises the question not only of how far the British are prepared to go in support of France but of what their attitude in general has been toward Italy.

During the Ethiopian crisis there was never any real clash between the British Foreign Office and Mussolini. The clash was between Mussolini and the huge majority of the British public. The British Foreign Office had to go through the motions of siding with the British public against Mussolini, but it never had the slightest intention of opposing him. It played the role of the angelic Mr. Spenlow in the British-French partnership and assigned to the French Foreign Office the part of the demon Jorkins.

As far as Spain is concerned, there has never been the slightest disagreement between the British Foreign Office and Mussolini. British non-intervention in the Spanish civil war has always been like the non-intervention of Mephistopheles in the duel between Faust and Marguerite's brother. Despite the obvious fact that Italian control of the coasts of the Spanish peninsula, Spanish Morocco, and the Balearic Islands would seriously embarrass the English navy in a war with Italy, Britain's conservative leaders fail to see a Franco victory, even with Mussolini's help, as a threat to the British Empire.

In the gentlemen's agreement of January, 1937, Mussolini promised Mr. Eden, then British Foreign Secretary, not to change the territorial status quo in Spain. On October 21, 1937, Mr. Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons that Mussolini had repeatedly declared that

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"Italy has no intention of making the smallest change in the territorial status quo of Spain, and has no designs upon the Balearic Islands." Last January when Chamberlain paid a visit to Mussolini, the latter gave him nothing less than "a specific word of honor" that he had "no territorial designs on Spain, Spanish Morocco, or the Balearic Islands, and, in fact, wouldn't take an inch of Spanish soil anywhere, not even if Generalissimo Francisco Franco forced it upon him in payment for all the Italian men, money, and machines that have been donated to the cause of civil war in Spain." It is likely that in return Chamberlain gave Mussolini his "specific word of honor" that if Mussolini challenged France on the Spanish issue, Chamberlain would force the French government to "appease" Mussolini "in the spirit of Munich."

To be sure, Chamberlain knows that Mussolini's promises are worth no more than those of a British Prime Minister. He knows that even if the insurgent Spanish generals do not actually cede territory to Mussolini, they may permit him to use Spanish ports as naval bases. But the British Admiralty does not seem perturbed by such a prospect. The fact is, it relies on its ability to control Mussolini by force rather than on his good faith. Mussolini, perhaps as a result of some "gentlemen's agreement," has occupied only three of the four Balearic Islands. The fourth island, Minorca, with its splendid harbor of Port Mahon, has been under the watchful eye if not the indirect control of the British and French ever since the spring of 1938. And their major concern, now that the end of the war seems imminent, is to have the island surrendered to Franco under British rather than Italian auspices. Bizerta in French Tunisia, Gibraltar at the entrance of the Mediterranean, Port Mahon in Minorca, and Toulon in southern France are sufficient bases in the western Mediterranean for the needs of English and French fleets.

Moreover, the British Conservative leaders foresee that the civil war will leave the Spanish people ruined for at least one generation. After their victory the insurgent generals will need loans from abroad in order to cope with their financial difficulties. The English will be able to offer them more of this kind of aid than Mussolini. Ingratitude is the independence of the heart, and diplomats and generals possess this noble virtue to a high degree. The Spanish generals, in British anticipations, will not be an exception to the rule. Thus Mussolini does the dirty work of intervening in Spain, the Italian taxpayer foots the bill, and the British Foreign Office will reap the profits, since—fascism or no fascism—Spain will always remain under British influence.

Here one might remark that a fascist government in Spain, allied with Mussolini, will threaten the French frontier along the Pyrenees. Why, then, does the British Foreign Office not realize that the victory of the insurgent generals in Spain will weaken the military situation of France—Britain's ally—in Europe? The answer is that the leaders of the British Conservative Party think that

..."HE TOOK WATER AND WASHED HIS HANDS"..

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as long as Spain remains under British control France will have nothing to fear from that quarter, provided, of course, that France sticks to Britain. Italian soldiers, before attacking France along the Pyrenees, would first have to reach Spain by sea. The French fleet, allied with the English fleet, could easily prevent them from getting there.

Joseph Driscoll, London correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune,* who last spring was able to foretell all the details of the Munich pact because he had been informed by Mr. Chamberlain himself about the events which were in store, has recently stated that "all indications" are that Chamberlain, Hitler, Mussolini, and Daladier will "make a deal over Spain as they did over Czechoslovakia last September." Such a deal "would involve a check on Spanish independence and perhaps a division of the country into 'spheres of interest' among the four big powers. Britain is particularly anxious to protect the present 'sphere of Gibraltar,' guarding the western gate of the Mediterranean." Mr. Driscoll did not give any other details on the "spheres of influence," but it is not difficult to guess that the French would get Catalonia, the English Andalusia and Spanish Morocco, and Hitler and Mussolini the rest of the country. In the end the French, menaced by Hitler on the east and by Mussolini in the Alps and in Spain, will have to accept the terms offered by the British. During the Czechoslovakian crisis last summer the presence of 80,000 Italian soldiers in Spain contributed no little to convincing the French that the only thing for them to do was to leave Czechoslovakia in the lurch.

In the operation of an alliance a twofold conflict takes place: one outside the alliance, between the allied powers and their common foes; the other within the alliance, between the allied powers themselves, in that each tries to prevent its ally from becoming so strong that it will no longer need an ally. A good diplomat always expects his best friend of today to become his worst enemy of tomorrow, and conducts himself accordingly. If the French have something to fear in Spain and need British help to allay that fear, all the better: French loyalty to the British alliance will be all the more unwavering.

Arms-Makers' Holiday

BY FRANK C. HANIGHEN

EUROPEAN nations—both democracies and dictatorships—are busy not only arming themselves but helping each other to rearm. The pace of this fantastic combination of cooperation and rivalry has now become so intense that it affects all parts of national economies as well as all social and political values. Today European rearmament enters a totalitarian stage which threatens the existence of democracy itself.

The sale of French iron ore to Germany offers a striking example of a democracy helping a dictatorship to rearm. For some time preceding the installation of the Front Populaire government in 1936, the left had demanded an embargo on shipment of French iron ore to Germany. This ore was obviously being used for Germany's rearmament. When Blum took office, he succeeded in having a law passed which apparently clamped an embargo on these shipments but which in reality contained a loophole in an "exceptions" clause. By invoking this clause the government permitted the ore to flow across the Rhine as before. Why the Blum government followed this curious course has never officially been made clear. But it is presumed that the government hoped to wring from Germany peace concessions —return to the League perhaps, or disarmament—by threatening to close the loophole. Be that as it may, the export of iron ore in large quantities to Germany continued until March, 1938. In this month—the month of the *Anschluss*—shipments fell to about 10 per cent of their former monthly average.

Had France finally wielded the club? Not at all. It was the German government which cut down the shipments. Apparently Berlin was seeking to force Paris's hand at a time when the French Cabinet was extremely shaky and the French economic and social struggle had reached a crisis. The German strategy succeeded. The owners of the affected mines, fearing loss of business, and the trade unions, fearing unemployment, asked the government to obtain resumption of the deliveries, which it did. Germany obtained an agreement by which the French government, in effect, renounced the threat of an embargo by guaranteeing shipments of 600,000 tons of iron ore a month to Germany.

Official figures show that France also shipped Germany 81,000 tons of bauxite, the ore of aluminum, in the first eleven months of 1937. Now the airplane industry uses large quantities of aluminum. It is estimated that the bauxite ore shipped annually from France to Germany produces about 10,000 tons of duralumin. If two tons of duralumin go into a plane, France, while feverishly buying aircraft in the United States, is annually furnishing Germany with necessary material for about 5,000 planes.

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Nor is that all. Writers on aircraft problems in France attribute the low production of the French airplane industry in part to lack of raw materials. Duralumin is one of the most important of these materials. In a confidential report which this writer was permitted to read, a foreign expert who had investigated the condition of the French airplane industry stated that lack of raw materials and the export of certain motors and aircraft accessories had caused delays in the production of French bombers. If France had deliberately tried to make the German air force stronger than its own, it could hardly have done better.

Most of the companies which are mining iron ore in northern Spain are in the hands of English interests—among them Guest, Keen, and Nettlefolds, with which firm Premier Chamberlain has had connections. After the German-Italian-rebel capture of Bilbao it was expected that Germany and Italy would squeeze Britain out of these preserves, but Britain imported even more of the Bilbao ore after Franco's victory than before. Had Britain won? Yes—and so had Germany. For Germany also began to import Bilbao ore in increasing quantities. By the middle of 1938 it was indicated that about a million tons of Bilbao ore would go to Germany during the year. This situation apparently confirms reports that a little "Munich in minerals" had been concluded by Chamberlain and Hitler.

The machine-tool business is as vital to rearmament as ores. Large-scale production of new and complicated weapons demands engineering equipment. One should not be surprised, then, to learn that Britain has had to go abroad for many of its machine tools. The Parliamentary Select Committee on Estimate has refused to publish figures on the foreign sources of these tools on the ground that such action would not be "wise." But it is known that the United States shipped Britain more than $11,000,000 worth of machine tools in 1937 and that heavy purchases were made in Germany. A foreign military attaché in London told me that one manufacturer in Britain had outfitted his munitions plant entirely with German machine tools, and had in fact employed a Berlin engineering firm to design and build his plant. Hugh Dalton, Labor M.P., stated in the House of Commons that "some of the plant for making gun barrels has had to be bought from Germany."

French armament officials say that there was more to the Franco-German ore deal in March, 1938, described above, than appeared on the surface. When the German and French negotiators sat down to settle the matter of shipments of Lorraine ore, the Germans held a high card. The semi-nationalized French airplane industry had failed to produce planes at a normal schedule because, among other reasons, machine tools necessary for large-scale production were lacking. The French machine-tool industry is weak; Germany's is the strongest in Europe. The French negotiators asked that Germany ship them large quantities of machine tools to equip their factories. The Germans, it seems, yielded on the point. For the aviation editor of *l'Intransigent* stated on October 19 that part of the 300 million francs spent on equipment for airplane factories went for machine tools ordered from Germany and other countries.

Have German manufacturers, then, defied the strict control of the German totalitarian system to arm a potential enemy? Not at all. The German system regiments arms-makers as well as other industrialists. Capitalists' profits are canalized back into armaments; raw materials are rationed to industry; and arms orders have priority over others. The fact is that Germany arms the enemy only when it has to. Germany found it necessary to export machine tools to France to obtain foreign exchange. The government decides just when the German arms-makers shall be permitted to help an adversary.

The German government, in fact, is capable of making some rather nice adjustments in these transactions. I discovered in the Loyalist trenches of the Lerida front last spring a modern automatic rifle which the soldiers declared had been purchased from Germany. Loyalist authorities admitted that a large number of these guns had been purchased "clandestinely" abroad. At first they refused to deny or confirm reports that the arms had been brought directly from Germany, but Negrin himself admitted to the Cortes at Figueras on February 1 that he had bought arms from both Germany and Italy. Germany betrayed Franco for two reasons: (1) hampered by a lack of foreign exchange it was in no position to disdain the "red" gold of Barcelona; (2) it could by this maneuver bind Italy closer to the axis. If the Loyalists by putting up a stiff defense kept Italy involved in Spain, Rome would remain dependent on German help. It is noteworthy that only defensive weapons were sold. German arms makers could doubtless have made more money selling the Loyalists heavy artillery and airplanes, but this might have transferred the power of the offensive to Barcelona.

Britain and France still remain far from attaining such finely sensitized control over the armament industry. French business men make huge profits selling to Germany and send these profits out of the country for safekeeping, to the detriment of both rearmament and finances. Britain permitted the Brooke Tool Company to make 168 per cent on its capital last year and the Handley-Page Aircraft Company to pay a dividend worth about 365 per cent of shares held in 1935. Meanwhile an aircraft ring hinders the efficient production of up-to-date planes, and we find General Temperley lamenting in the London *Daily Telegraph* that failure to give priority to war orders has seriously handicapped British rearmament.

Can the democracies afford this muddle of profiteer-

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ing and inefficiency? Apparently they are beginning to realize that real rearmament requires sacrifices, for the tide is already changing. But in Britain and France, as in Germany in 1933, the workers are to be given the first chance to make the sacrifices. British unions must allow factory owners to "dilute" their personnel with low-paid semi-skilled workers; France, according to Daladier, must be "industrious" to be "strong."

Workers in the democracies not only accept the arms business but identify it with their own material welfare. French unions in 1937 petitioned the Minister of the Navy to speed up work on the battleship Jean Bart to avoid laying off men. In England local labor organizations have frequently demanded that the government build munitions plants in their districts. Workers have come to regard armament activity as a personal benefit.

Their attitude may serve as a first wedge for fascism. For the workers, feeling as they do, are in a weak position to object when the appeal of national good is used to curtail individual good. In the fall of 1938 the French press started a vigorous drive against the forty-hour week as a deterrent to efficient rearmament. The government responded by making the forty-five-hour week compulsory in munitions factories. Labor leaders admitted to me at that time that they simply had to yield in the face of popular outcry. One month later not only munitions workers but all organized labor had to submit—with only a brief struggle—to the general abandonment of the forty-hour week. Their defeat in the general strike meant that social values won by years of hard fighting must go down before the irresistible tide of arming.

The second wedge—regimentation of industry and capital—has not yet appeared. The democratic governments apparently fear the Federation of British Industries and the Comité des Forges more than they do Transport House and the Fédération Générale de Travail. But if Britain and France take these final steps, the cycle of totalitarian preparations for war will be completed in Europe. Then "democracy" and "Western civilization" in the Old World will be sucked entirely into the whirlpool of rearmament.

The Fight for Social Security

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

VERY few persons seem to realize how far-reaching are the amendments to the Social Security Act proposed by the Social Security Board and by the Advisory Council on Social Security. If they are adopted by Congress this country will have, for the first time, a system of social insurance comparable to the better European systems.

Only one of the many recommendations of the Advisory Council, which was appointed by the board and a Congressional committee to study the problem, has received much publicity. This is the suggestion that the coverage of the old-age insurance scheme be broadened by at least six million persons by the inclusion of seamen and employees of non-profit, religious, charitable, and educational institutions, banks, and small enterprises. The council recommended further that domestic workers and farm laborers be brought in as soon as feasible. Such an extension of coverage is highly desirable. There was never any sound reason for the exclusion of these groups. But the extension of coverage is by no means the most important of the recommended changes.

The main difficulty with the old-age insurance scheme from the beginning has been that only the young obtain any real protection from it. No one who was sixty years of age or older when the act was passed in 1935 is eligible for benefits as the act now stands. Few in their fifties are scheduled to receive enough to keep the wolf from the door. A typical factory worker earning $25 a week who was fifty years of age when the act came into effect could—providing he worked every day until he was sixty-five—look forward to a munificent retirement allowance of $28.75 a month. Those who were older, whose wages were lower, or who worked irregularly—in other words, the most insecure—would get less.

Now in most cities an aged couple can barely subsist on $30 a month and certainly cannot live in decency on less than that. Recognizing this the Advisory Council suggested that a supplementary allowance of 50 per cent be paid when men have wives over sixty-five years of age to support. This represents an important advance. If adopted, it would constitute the first clear recognition of the principle of family responsibility in the American social-security system. But it obviously does not solve the problem. Most of the wives of elderly men are younger than their husbands, usually several years younger. Except in rare instances they have depended on their husbands for support for so many years that they are incapable of earning their own living. The economic status of most households is gauged, not by the age of the wife, but by the age of the husband. The plain fact of the matter is that the wives' allowance was recommended because the benefits originally scheduled were too small to support

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an aged couple. This is just as true when the wife is fifty-five or sixty as when she is sixty-five.

The Social Security Board has gone the Advisory Council one better. It has suggested that in order to bring the old-age benefits to a more respectable level, the worker's average wage be substituted for accumulated wages as the basis for the benefit. This would meet the problem squarely by removing the discrimination against those who are too old to have piled up any appreciable contribution since the act went into effect in 1937. Unfortunately, the board has not pushed the idea beyond the suggestion stage, and it is doubtful whether it will win much support in Congress. The President did not even mention it in his message to Congress.

Even more striking, when one considers the strength of the insurance lobby in Washington, is the Advisory Council's recommendation for protection of widows and orphans. Unlike the European social-insurance systems, the Social Security Act provided no survivors' insurance. Such aid must be obtained at present through the states, after establishing need. The maximum for a dependent child is $18 a month, while a widow shouldered with the responsibility of raising a fatherless family is not entitled to a cent. The Advisory Council recommends what is, in effect, a life-insurance policy connected with the old-age insurance scheme. Should the family breadwinner die leaving minor children, each of his children and his widow would be entitled to regular monthly benefits. No amount has been fixed for these benefits, but it is suggested that they bear some relation to the average wage of the head of the family rather than to his aggregate wages. Thus there would be no discrimination against the children of a young worker merely because he died before piling up contributions. The council also recommended that widows of insured workers receive a pension at the age of sixty-five regardless of whether their husbands died before or after reaching the age of retirement.

It is only when one contrasts the relative benefits and costs of this proposal with the benefits and costs of industrial life insurance, which is the only protection now available for most wage-earners, that its full significance is apparent. Industrial life insurance costs the workers of the country well over a billion dollars a year. The average policy of $200 or $250 just about defrays burial costs, leaving no protection for the widow and children. And the average worker loses even this protection by allowing his policy to lapse. Only about eight industrial policies out of a hundred, over a period of years, have been closed on account of death, maturity, or expiration. The survivors' insurance proposed by the Advisory Council will not cost the worker a cent more than he is already scheduled to pay for old-age protection. There will be a small lump sum to cover burial, and a regular monthly allowance to be paid until the children are sixteen or eighteen years of age. There will be no lapsing and no loss in unneeded protection while the essentials go uncared for.

Should this plan be enacted, industrial insurance will be dealt a blow from which it may never recover. Whether the insurance companies will allow it to go through remains to be seen. Open opposition would be difficult, as industrial insurance is scarcely in a position to stand much publicity. The real danger is that the companies will appear to support the proposal in public, but see to it that it is quietly killed in committee. Only widespread publicity, stressing the importance of this new protection for the rank and file of American citizens, can protect the plan against such an attack.

The Advisory Council has been somewhat less helpful on the question of protection against disability. Although it agreed unanimously that workers who are disabled by sickness or other causes before they reach sixty-five are probably more in need of help than the average aged person, members disagreed among themselves as to whether it was possible to aid such persons out of the old-age insurance fund. At present the disabled are the forgotten men in our security system. If a man is unemployed, he is eligible either for insurance or work relief; if he is the victim of an industrial accident, he may obtain workmen's compensation; if he is disabled by reason of age, he may receive either old-age insurance or old-age assistance. But if he is wholly incapacitated by sickness or a non-industrial accident, no provision is made for him.

It is generally agreed that protection against disability and old age should be closely linked. Both involve a cessation rather than a mere interruption of earning power. A man of forty-five who is totally disabled faces almost exactly the same problems as an elderly worker who is no longer able to get a job. Indeed, old age might merely be called the most frequent cause of disability. Yet total disability comes before the age of sixty-five much more frequently than most people realize. Experience in other countries has shown that from a quarter to a half of the causes of total disability occur before the age of sixty-five. Yet unless there is strong popular pressure, it is doubtful whether this session of Congress will do anything to fill in this very serious gap in our social-security system.

Another serious shortcoming in the Advisory Council's program is its failure to come to grips specifically with the reserve problem. While it did place itself on record as opposing a fully invested reserve such as is required in private insurance, no steps have been advocated for putting the system on a frank pay-as-you-go basis. Increased benefits such as have been described will probably reduce the reserves far below the amount originally envisioned. The dangers described by John T. Flynn in the February *Harpers* may never materialize. But the reserves remain. They may still run into the tens of billions

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of dollars. Extension of the coverage of old-age insurance to some millions of white-collar workers, farm laborers, and domestic help will yield new income that will offset, in part, at least, the additional benefits. Thus the Social Security Act will continue to take substantially more from the wage-earning and low-income groups of the country in taxation than it returns in benefits. As long as this is the case, its long-run economic value will be dubious.

On the other hand, the Social Security Board's recommendations with regard to the federal-state assistance programs are distinctly helpful. The long-standing discrimination against dependent children is to be eliminated by putting them on the same basis as the aged and blind. Thus, instead of a maximum $18 benefit for the first child and $12 for succeeding children, toward which the federal government contributes only $6 and $4 respectively, the maximum is to be $30, toward which the federal government will contribute $15. It is suggested also that for children in school the pension be continued until the age of eighteen. In addition, it is proposed that the federal grants for all the assistance programs be placed on a variable percentage basis, with maximum and minimum limitations, so as to take into account the varying economic capacities of the different states. This admirable recommendation, if accepted, will eliminate one of the most serious limitations in the federal assistance program, and should make for much more uniformity in the pensions paid in the various states.

Taken as a whole, the recommendations of the Advisory Council and the Social Security Board represent fully as important a stride toward genuine social security as the original report of the Committee on Economic Security which preceded the passage of the Social Security Act. The chief weaknesses remaining are in the field of unemployment insurance. Here the board made only trifling suggestions, leaving the main problems almost exactly where they were. The experience of the past year with unemployment insurance has been little short of disgraceful. In the first place, our system is loaded in favor of the better-paid worker. In addition, it has all but broken down in many states because of poor administration and undue complexity.

If the establishment of a national system to replace the present cumbersome federal-state plan, a step which many experts still favor, is not yet feasible, much can be done to simplify the present system. There appears to be no valid reason, for example, why the federal government should not collect the entire 3 per cent tax and then support the state insurance funds by direct grants to the states, as is now done with old-age and children's pensions. By the introduction of wage classes the necessity for computing the annual wage of every worker could be eliminated. Moreover, it is obvious that something will have to be done quickly if the merit-rating system—a plan to vary the tax on industries in accordance with their employment record—is to be headed off. This plan will come into effect, in most states, in 1940 or 1941. While most experts doubt whether any state will be able to cope with the complexity of record-keeping that is required by the merit-rating system, there is no assurance that states will not drift into it by default and thus wreck their entire unemployment-insurance systems. An amendment to the federal act outlawing merit-rating would prevent such a situation from arising. This action ought to be taken at the present session of Congress if we are to avoid the risk of shattering the whole unemployment-compensation plan, with its very real protection for American workers.

Pocket Guide

BLUE-PENCILING THE ADS

THE advertising business is worried about the Federal Trade Commission, badly worried. Last session Congress passed the Lea bill, which gave the FTC the power to censor advertising. This had the enthusiastic backing of the ad-men. Why? Because they had been afraid that censorship would be placed in the hands of the Food and Drug Administration. They thought they could get along better with the Federal Trade Commission. So now the FDA censors the labels while the FTC censors the ads. Both jobs require the same preliminary investigation, but business men prefer this division of authority, however much they may wail about the waste of government money.

The Federal Trade Commission, however, has been a sad disappointment to business. With the authority given it by the Lea bill it isn't as lenient with the advertisers as it used to be. It is being particularly hard on the cosmetic people. No longer can they claim that this cream or that mask will remove or prevent lines or wrinkles, lift muscles, affect contours, or nourish the skin. Of course no cream can nourish the skin. If you want something to smooth and clean your skin, then lanolin will do as well as any expensive advertised cream and for a lot less money. But bright advertising people can always find loopholes in a law, and copy can come pretty near the line without crossing.

MONEY-MAKING DEPARTMENT

Which department would you say is the most profitable in a big department store? Shoes, or silks, or cosmetics? No. Sometimes the advertising department—the place where all the money is spent—is the one that makes the biggest profit.

Even in the dismal years just passed, when so many stores showed a loss as a whole, the advertising departments here and there made money. The money came from selling nationally advertised brands. The store uses the brand name—such and such suits, such and such shoes—and the manufacturer pays for the advertising. That reduces expenses, but of course doesn't mean a profit. The profit comes in this way. The stores get a special low rate from newspapers because they use an immense amount of space and because they're good bargainers. They don't pass on this low rate to the manu-

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facturer, though they can give him a lower rate than he gets for himself on his own comparatively small contracts. He profits from the store's prestige and this slightly lower rate. The stores, if they do enough advertising of brands, can show a profit on their own advertising.

CONSUMER GROUPS

Here is a letter from Georgia G. Pence of Sterling, Kansas, which frames some questions that I have been asked by a number of other people:

> What is the ultimate purpose of the National Consumers Tax Commission, Inc.? If it is to save the housewife money through eradicating or reducing hidden taxes, why is it necessary for it to become incorporated?
>
> Is there more to it than meets the eye—or ear? . . . Is it a group trying to discredit the present Administration? Is it a group of grocers fighting against grade labels on canned goods? Is it a group trying to lower the high standards of the Pure Food and Drug Act? Or might the munition makers be trying to divert the women while they put through Congress a tasty bill? If this commission is sponsored by business, by what phase of business?

I cannot say what the ultimate purpose of this Consumers Tax Commission is. It doesn't seem to me that the plans it proposes would save the housewife money. I don't know why it is necessary for it to become incorporated to accomplish any such purpose. Certainly it represents a group that is antagonistic to the present national Administration. It seems also to be opposed to grade labeling of canned goods. There has been some talk that it is backed by the chain stores, but the chain stores deny this.

The following is a list of excellent consumer organizations. It would be a good thing to get in touch with them.

Food and Drug Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Publishes the *Consumers Guide*, which can be obtained free of charge.

Federal Trade Commission, Washington, D. C. Publishes monthly report which is sent free of charge to anybody who asks for it.

Cooperative League of America, 167 West Twelfth Street, New York. In its work on cooperatives the League has accumulated a great deal of material of interest to consumers.

Consumers Union, 17 Union Square West, New York. Publishes a monthly report which is a buying guide on products.

Intermountain Consumers Service, Denver, Colorado. Like Consumers Union, but for Far West only.

Consumers Research, Washington, New Jersey. On the same order as Consumers Union but reactionary in politics and in its attitude toward labor.

American Home Economics Association, 52 Mills Building, Washington, D. C. Doing excellent work. Publishes *Journal of Home Economics*.

American Association of University Women, 22 East Thirty-eighth Street, New York. Works for the grading of fresh and canned foods.

National Consumers League, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York. Works only for legislation.

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 3 West Sixteenth Street, New York. Is becoming more and more active on consumer fronts.

HELEN WOODWARD

In the Wind

WHEN OREGON'S anti-union law was enacted last November, there was widespread talk about the financial resources used to promote the measure. Commenting triumphantly on the outcome of the fight, the Salem (Oregon) *Capitol-Journal* observed inadvertently that the bill had been "approved at the November election by a $50,000 majority."

ON HIS recent jaunt to Chicago, Vice-President Garner accentuated the split between himself and supporters of the New Deal. The pro-New Deal American Newspaper Guild is waging a strike there against the Hearst papers, which are violently opposed to the New Deal. Partly to offset unfavorable publicity created by the strike, the Hearst-owned *Herald-Examiner*, now manned by strike-breakers, put on an elaborate show celebrating the installation of four new presses. The climax of the ceremonies was reached when Garner pressed the button starting the presses.

THE LEFTIST League of American Writers recently held a meeting to discuss the adverse treatment of leftist books by reviewers on capitalist journals. George Seldes and Max Lerner were the speakers. But the invitation to Lerner didn't make clear the point of the meeting. After Seldes had related instances of the mistreatment accorded his book on the press, Lerner caused some embarrassment by declaring that his own experience was just the reverse. He said that the "unfairest" review of his book had appeared in the *Daily Worker* and added that one of the few publications which had thus far failed to review it was the *New Masses*.

THERE'S A new game current in Germany designed to encourage "racialism" among children. Called the "Jew dice game," it is played on a board along which miniature figures of Jews are moved along numbered tracks to a point determined by the throw of the dice. The end of the tracks is marked "Palestine." If on the way the figure lands in a square marked "Dachau," it is eliminated. There are penalties for landing on "Passport Difficulties" and "Currency Crimes."

THE WEST COAST'S "Golden Gate" exposition will feature a Cavalcade of the Golden West. After a preview of the performance held recently for exposition officials, one major alteration was ordered. Attacks on the dictator nations contained in the concluding speech are to be removed lest Japan and Germany withdraw from the fair.

WHEN THE House of Representatives voted to slash the relief appropriation, it discreetly avoided a record vote and revealed only the totals on the "tally-vote." The dodge was rendered ineffective, however, when Labor's Non-Partisan League checked with observers and progressive Congressmen, drafted a tentative record, and submitted it to every Congressman for correction. Now a record vote is available—from the league.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THAT the best defense for this democracy against the dictators is putting our house in order has received the clearest kind of proof from the Nazis. In their rage at the hostile attitude of the United States government toward them they have turned to our record in Puerto Rico and made effective use of it. On February 1 *Das Schwarze Korps,* the organ of the Black Shirts, charged that the United States authorities are using terrorism and "OGPU methods in Puerto Rico." It said:

> The miseries of the Puerto Rican population during the last ten years far exceed what another freedom-loving people, the Arabs, have had to endure under the domination of another great democracy. The methods of terrorism with which the American governor with his police attempts to hold down the national leaders of Puerto Rico's independence movement find their like only in the deeds of the OGPU. . . . Governor Winship, who enjoys Washington's high esteem, attempts to model himself as far as possible on his prototype Stalin. . . . Puerto Rico is only one of the many points where the deeds of American democrats and peace-lovers are separated by an unbridgeable gulf from their preaching. . . . One day the victims will present their bill.

The article then goes on to tell of the mass murder at Ponce on Palm Sunday, 1937, correctly charging that the police "turned machine-guns on crowds with a cold-bloodedness of gangsters," only it was not crowds but the members of a little independence parade. While there are marked exaggerations in the passage quoted at length above, in the main the indictment is a correct one. If Governor Winship is hardly to be compared with Stalin, he is none the less of the autocratic, dictatorial type in his method of government, regarding events from the standpoint of the military man who believes in meeting legitimate protests against almost unbearable conditions with an iron hand. The massacre at Ponce was largely due to the fact that he really believed an insurgent army was converging on Ponce from various points. Had he gone to Ponce in person and encouraged the few demonstrators to exercise their American right of marching in protest, while telling them that they must leave their arms at home, I believe that nothing would have happened.

But waiving the question of Governor Winship's fitness, the fact is that conditions in this unhappy island are getting steadily worse. It is admitted in press dispatches that the standard of living has never been so depressed. The huts of the poverty-stricken, unemployed people in San Juan and other towns disgrace the American flag—I speak from the personal knowledge that any tourist on the island can obtain if he only uses his eyes. I happen to know that officials in Washington concerned with conditions there are now greatly alarmed because Congress will not give them the money they need to keep numbers of people from actually starving to death. Nothing constructive is being done to remedy the fundamental conditions, which exist primarily because the United States government has from the beginning of our occupation permitted violations of the law forbidding any corporation to own more than 500 acres of land. It was a wise law and a humane one and was passed immediately after our capture of the island, but not a single President has enforced it, and the result is just what was feared. Foreign-owned companies have got possession of great stretches of land, and the peasant-owner has become the peasant-tenant or worker and is trying to subsist on wages which would be bad enough if he were employed 300 days in the year, and are horribly inadequate for canefield workers employed for only a short season. On top of this the population has increased by nearly a million. The Nazis would only have told the truth had they said that the people of Puerto Rico are far worse off than they were under the Spanish flag. *There are 750,000 people in need of relief, and Congress is giving no relief.*

The island is thus another illustration of that weakness of administration which is so characteristic of the New Deal and may yet wholly wreck it. I don't believe that the Administration is satisfied with Governor Winship, and I am bold enough to believe that he would have been removed before this if it had not been for the criminal attack upon him which nearly cost him his life, killed a man by his side, and has already led to the sentencing of five men to prison for life. One cannot remove an American official at such a moment. But now that these sentences have been passed, the first step toward the rescue of Puerto Rico should be the appointment of some more competent person—a Puerto Rican if a suitable one can be found. I know the name of at least one. That alone, however, will not be enough to save the Puerto Ricans and to prevent a really terrible disaster. The President must give his personal attention to this and rouse Congress to an understanding of what is happening—it is at least worth a fireside chat over the radio. Curing the sore there will do infinitely more for our national safety, honor, and prestige than a dozen battleships.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

IN TIME OF HESITATION

BY CONSTANCE ROURKE

IN ONE of the many encirclements of ideas contrived within the comparatively short space of his new book,* Lewis Mumford speaks of the intellectual culture of our time as too remote from the masses to serve them satisfactorily. It is the special triumph of the program which he sets forth that it meets and uses deeply rooted popular forces, and that its terms can be promptly understood. "Men Must Act" is as direct as a good broadside. With immediacy and restrained eloquence, indeed with the effect of the spoken word, it belongs in the great pamphleteering tradition. It will sharpen wits and vocabularies, or provide trenchant vocabularies when these are missing. Yet it is not merely a tract for the times. It deals with permanent values. It defines a course of action and the enduring groundwork for that course; and it touches, with unerring clairvoyance, essential popular impulses and beliefs in the present crisis.

Since November 10 a marked transition in broad sections of popular thought has taken place; no one who goes out through the country can mistake it. Not only has fascism at last been openly condemned but the event has had an unexpected outcome. Mass-meetings which were planned as protests against the German pogrom, and which have voiced them, have also moved toward a recognition of the rising dangers of fascism in the United States, and finally, with remarkable unanimity, have included a reaffirmation of faith in democracy. One might almost say that after a long season of befuddlement democracy had been rediscovered. This progression of ideas has been striking; yet many forces still make for confusion, not least those created by the spell of the genteel tradition in politics, the spell of liberalism, with its excess of fine-spun talk, its gift for finding crucial matters "interesting," with what Mumford calls "its priggish fear of committing unfair moral judgments." During the last months and even years liberalism has, with singular self-abnegation, been occupied with the task of laying the blame for fascism at our own door, or President Wilson's, forgetting Brest-Litovsk, disregarding what Germany would have done with victory, forgetting the rising strength of the German Republic in spite of Versailles, and too much occupied by these intellectual exercises, too beautifully perfectionist in spirit, to consider hurricane signals.

Confusion, hesitation, and bewilderment still obtain, in spite of a great clarification in popular judgment. Two apparently irreconcilable impulses have become articulate; the desire to act, expressed with great immediacy and persistence by the boycotts; and the desire to maintain American isolation. Both are genuine; each is at work, not too far beneath the surface. Each is grounded in the national experience and tradition. Our ready impulse to act, with the belief that the face of things may be changed for the better by action, obviously derives from our not too remote experience on frontiers; and it is matched or offset by our long schooling in isolation, which has gained added strength from the disillusionment following the World War.

In a chapter called Civilization's Gordian Knot, Mumford reverses the habitual use of the metaphor, and makes the altered symbol a point of departure for interpreting essential differences between democracy and fascism. Alexander "solved the problem by doing away with the very elements that made it a problem: namely, the nature of the knot and the continuity of the cord itself. . . . Each generation finds itself confronted with a Gordian knot that must be untied. . . . The whole problem of political society consists in achieving order out of a multitude of conflicting interests: in achieving common purposes without annihilating individual energies and aptitudes and designs. . . . But the prime political condition of untying the knot is this: the rope itself shall be unharmed. . . ." Democracy, with its often slow and fumbling methods, seeks to preserve the continuity of the strands and to use their tensile power. Democracy, in other words, safeguards civilization, while fascism, by its barbaric simplicity, destroys civilization, and is in fact barbarism.

It is the virtue and strength of Mumford's program in "Men Must Act" that he applies this principle in the present dilemma. Neither strand of popular conviction is destroyed; both are used, both are kept intact. At the same time he provides a rationale for an inevitable position by unfolding an analysis of "the pathology of fascism" and "the potency of the pathological. . . . The fascist countries are no longer simply political states . . . they are states of mind. A government which exists by terrorism is forever hounded by a baleful shadow, the shadow of peace. . . . Its method, even within its own boundaries, is the method of the provocateur. . . . Its lust for power is insatiable: in that sense the fascist states

* "Men Must Act." By Lewis Mumford. Harcourt, Brace and Company. Cloth, $1.50; paper, 75 cents.

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will always be have-nots." Thus any effort to bring the fascist countries into a workable international scheme is folly; nor can one believe that the fascist forces will leave this country untouched.

In his recent speech Hitler ridiculed the idea of a fascist attack on the United States, thus showily using one of the straw men which have diverted attention from genuine issues. But as Mumford says, the new totalitarian war is "a war of psychic demoralization rather than of direct military attack," and its force in America, if unchecked, will be felt through the anarchical but progressive destruction of the many international relationships which, as free agents, we still enjoy. Though the means is not overt, the objective is none the less obvious. The final enemy against which fascism is remorselessly set is not communism but democracy. The anti-Comintern is shadow-boxing. The persistent attacks on the democracies in public speeches and in the German press have been taken as mere muddy effervescence, but as Mumford makes clear in a remorseless analysis, they are indications of a purposeful instinct. Democracy and fascism are incompatible, they will not mix; and we must realize the cleavage as clearly as do the dictators. Nor should this be particularly difficult with the barter system to the fore, and the program of the Fascist International fully blueprinted, glossed, and annotated.

Mumford's program is one of counter-attack. He would use our continental isolation. He gives to isolation a dynamic function. Non-intercourse is the core of this program, not the simple non-intercourse ineffectually attempted toward the close of Jefferson's Administration, but a fully oriented and implemented act which would have, within our now far more powerful empire, the chance of an overwhelming success. Our accredited representatives would be withdrawn from Germany, Italy, and Japan. The first step in that direction has of course already been taken. Our investments in the fascist countries would be liquidated: here too substantial beginnings have been made—by the fascist countries. A long list of instances could be compiled, whether one begins with the suspension of trade in China or with the refusal of Germany to service the Austrian debt. By the Mumford plan a complete embargo would be placed on trade with the fascist countries; and the entry of fascist vessels to our ports would be prohibited even when they carry cargoes of non-fascist origin. Thus we would make complete the boycotts which have been initiated, and we would withdraw our resources from fascist use, not least those provided by tourist dollars. Thus we would resolve the absurd dilemma recently defined in the columns of *The Nation* and clarified in detail by Eliot Janeway. We would no longer be arming against the fascist powers with one hand and furnishing them with armaments, to be used in a variety of ways against us, with the other.

At the same time we would expel fascist forces from our midst. Systematic deportation of Germans and Italians who remain fascist subjects would follow, and the privileges of citizenship would be withdrawn from naturalized aliens who maintain a divided allegiance. Presumably these individuals, too, when shorn of citizenship, would be deported.

At every salient point we would take action. Our purpose would be to isolate, not ourselves, but fascism. In this there is nothing of the messianic purpose, about which so much has recently been said on both sides of the Atlantic, as if to create another of the straw men bobbing up on all sides. This would not be an attempt "to police the world," but a hard-headed effort to provide the most effective form of self-defense. What is essential, as Mumford sees it, is that we shall act, and act alone, regardless of eventualities elsewhere. If England and France are on the way to becoming vassal states, wittingly or unwittingly, it would be against our interest to assist them with food or munitions even during an interim of apparent peace. If war actually breaks out, we should free ourselves by a suspension of the Neutrality Act to reinforce the democratic powers by supplying materials.

That the Mumford plan means war, another of the tacit wars which have become the mode of our time, is clear enough; but this is less an obstacle to its acceptance than would have been the case six months ago. The general support of rearmament is partial proof, as is the widespread conviction that if the broad clash comes we shall not be able to remain outside. The crux is not at this point but in the "passivism" which Mumford amply discusses, or in the opportunism which he calls "wishful waiting." Now that the rumor of economic collapse within the fascist states has grown louder we may await the event with a casual optimism—"Napoleon fell, didn't he?"—and without realizing that time, usually supposed to abet the righteous, may now be on the other side.

Mumford's program does more than resolve an ominous confusion; some of his best passages prove that action is essential if our democracy is to be sustained from within. The clew is in his title: "Men Must Act." Passivism means the gradual crumbling of principle. Our failure to act in relation to loyalist Spain and to China, which still lies heavily upon our consciences, may mean the beginning of a creeping paralysis. "Shrinkage and withdrawal" are forces of destruction. Indeed, this whole book may be read as an anatomy of democracy, so persuasively does it reinforce the concept that a democracy must assume fresh positive forms or perish. No doubt the frayed straw man called "war hysteria" will be set up, somewhat larger than life, to confront the Mumford program. But I think this program will sustain itself because it is simple and forthright, because it comes close to popular feeling, and because it is built upon fundamentals in our character and tradition. In the rush of dark events it provides a touchstone and a philosophy.

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Tragedy in Minnesota

WIND WITHOUT RAIN. By Herbert Krause. Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

ANYONE who has read Vardis Fisher's Idaho tetralogy will be reminded of the first volume of that somber chronicle when he reads "Wind Without Rain." The grim hills of Minnesota have replaced the grim hills of Idaho, but the physical and mental sufferings of Franz Vildvogel follow much the same pattern as those of Vridar Hunter; the people have the same twisted souls; life has the same bitterness. Men reap violence and death in a country where nature yields food and warmth grudgingly and lashes out only too often with lightning, tornado, or blizzard. But chiefly both writers dramatize the tragic discord between men and their own souls: the war between warm, natural desires and the blight of a religion packed with hell-fire and brimstone; the brutality of a tyrannical, hard-handed father, goaded by his own sense of guilt and frustration, embittering the lives of his entire household; the tortures of a sensitive boy in the grip of an environment that crushes even the strong.

The themes of the two books are also strikingly alike. Compare the lines which gave Vardis Fisher the titles for his series—

> In tragic life, God wot,
> No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:
> We are betrayed by what is false within—

with this reflection by the character in "Wind Without Rain" who tells the story: "I can laugh now, almost . . . knowing more about this fire added to flame, the uninvited urgings hawklike at muscle and bone; knowing, too, after these years, that the hounds of wrath within us, leashes off and merciless, are snarling a nearer doom than any Bible trumpet."

But while this quotation may well express Mr. Krause's *leitmotif,* it serves equally well to illustrate the principal artistic contradiction of his book: namely, the fact that the narrator, Jepthah Vildvogel, would not conceivably have written in such a style. The son of a backwoods German-American family to whom the Bible was all the reading needful or proper, he attended for a few years, quite reluctantly, a very bad one-room rural school where the dictionary was used chiefly as a missile to hurl at unruly pupils; and even the explanation that many years later, after a crippling accident, he was removed to a hospital where there were lots of books, hardly justifies the elaborateness of his very consciously wrought sentences.

Except for this one enigma, the story of the Vildvogel family is harrowingly convincing. From the memory of his own youth on a Minnesota farm Mr. Krause has drawn a thousand details of the never-ending chores, the dreadful feel of approaching storms, the bone-shaking lurch of a wagon over rocky cart tracks, the friendly yet often cruel inquisitiveness of neighbors, the heavy shadow of debt over mortgaged land. Passions indeed spin the plot; no villain is needed but the hounds of wrath within to drive these uncomprehending morfals to sorrow, madness, death. No appeal to the reader's pity is needed but the unadorned history of their blind gropings toward happiness.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

Liberal England

THE AGE OF REFORM, 1815-1870. By E. L. Woodward. Oxford University Press. $6.

GLADSTONE AND THE IRISH NATION. By J. L. Hammond. Longmans, Green and Company. $12.50.

IN PRESENTING the report on the census of Great Britain in 1871, the Census Commissioners quoted the proud words of Milton: "Lords and Commons of England, consider what nation it is whereof ye are and whereof ye are the governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to." The English middle class in the seventeenth century not only had laid the foundation of England's greatness but had developed the incomparable system of guaranties for civil liberties on which civilized life in the nineteenth century could develop, liberties the whole importance of which we only start again to appreciate today when they are threatened by a new barbarism. The nineteenth century in England was an age of progressive reforms: 1815 found the nation with both central and local administration in a state of complete chaos, with most widespread corruption and family patronage, with incredible poverty, squalor, and degradation of life. A slow and progressive fight against these conditions filled the nineteenth century. It was a struggle of much confusion, but the main tendency was unmistakable. E. L. Woodward describes this age of reform in a broad and solid survey which takes into account all the different aspects of England's internal and external policy and of its social and cultural life. It is a judicious and well-balanced book; it shows not only the high hopes but the grave defects and the serious dangers still prevailing in the industrialized England of 1870, which nevertheless could claim to have laid the foundations of civilized social life.

But a new age was threatening. It was possible, as Woodward points out, to use the new productive resources to resist the social and political changes which, logically, they implied: "The failure of political liberalism in Central Europe left the way open for the unification of Germany in the interest of the class least affected in its habits of thought and scale of values by the 'age of reform.' Such a 'return of the past' was a European calamity on a scale so vast that its meaning could not be realized at the time." In this age of imperialism liberal England made one great effort to assert itself. J. L. Hammond, who has explored the social history of the early nineteenth century in several important volumes, gives us in a great and moving book, in the best liberal English tradition, an account of Gladstone's Irish policy. It unfolds an epic story of the fight of the sense for justice against the imperial sense of national egoism and *raisons d'état,* of the faith in moral forces against old prejudices and fears, comparable only to the Dreyfus affair in France. "In a world where armed strength was becoming more and more the undisputed master, a great statesman was asking one of the leading peoples to make its undoubted power obey the unarmed voice of justice. Nations have sometimes acted justly from necessity; but in this case a great nation was to act justly

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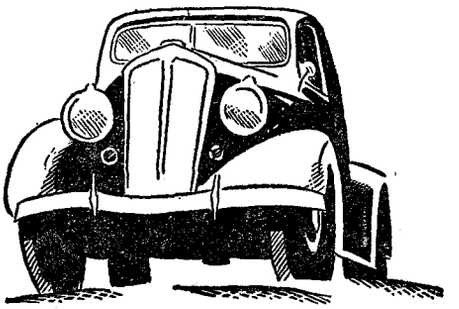

WHICH 1939 CARS ARE "BEST BUYS"?

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Just what does this jargon mean to you in terms of transportation?

Which of these terms represent essential values that you should look for in buying an automobile?

To guide auto buyers to economical and intelligent choices, Consumers Union's automotive consultants have examined the 1939 automobiles. Their findings are published in the current (February) issue of *Consumers Union Reports.*

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PONTIAC	OVERLAND	CADILLAC	CHEVROLET
FORD	WILLYS	STUDEBAKER	CHRYSLER
BUICK	PLYMOUTH	DE SOTO	PACKARD
OLDSMOBILE	DODGE	MERCURY	HUDSON

These ratings are based on such factors as economy of operation, durability, safety, and mechanical soundness. Appraisals of the new features such as "force-back overdrives" are given in terms of their worth to car owners and tables are printed showing comparative gas mileage obtained from recent test runs and other comparative statistics of prime importance in choosing a car.

Read this report before you buy *any* 1939 car! It will help you to make substantial savings not only on the initial purchase price but on operating costs as well.

Other reports in this issue give valuable buying information on canned tomatoes, tomato juice, window shades and industries insurance (the insurance that doesn't insure!).

By mailing the coupon below, you can get this issue—followed by eleven more monthly issues. In April—at no extra cost—you will also get Consumers Union's 1939 *Annual Buying Guide*—a 288-page handbook rating over 2,000 brands of products as "Best Buys," "Also Acceptable," and "Not Acceptable."

To CONSUMERS UNION of U. S., Inc.
17 Union Square W., New York, N. Y.

Send me *Consumers Union Reports* for one year and the 1939 *Buying Guide* when it appears. I enclose $3. I agree to keep confidential all material sent to me which is so designated.

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from choice." In Gladstone's Irish policy the forces of liberalism and of conservative nationalism opposed each other, as they did in the Dreyfus affair. Gladstone and the Dreyfusards had to fight against an immense mass of hatred, fear, inertia, and prejudice; they had to face accusations and execrations of unprecedented bitterness. The spiritual adventure of Gladstone's crusade for the reconciling power of freedom, in which he succeeded in enlisting half of the English people, although not the vested interests of monarchy, aristocracy, and church, is told by Mr. Hammond in great detail and with a wealth of documents. Although the price of the book is prohibitive—for a larger public it may be desirable to publish a shortened and cheaper edition—the book should be widely read today. For in Gladstone's treatment of the Irish question lived a tradition of European liberalism coupled with moral courage and farsightedness which is sadly lacking among the British statesmen who at present lead the party which blocked all the efforts of Gladstone.

HANS KOHN

Biography of Berlioz

BERLIOZ. By J. H. Elliot. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.

THE Master Musicians Series has filled an obvious gap by adding a "Berlioz" to its list. Unfortunately the editor, Eric Blom—who is also the distinguished music critic of the Manchester *Guardian*—has assigned the task to his second-in-command on that paper, and in the absence of any special fitness the result is just another bad book on Berlioz.

It is easy enough, once an artist or thinker has been ransomed from neglect or abuse, to expatiate on his merits and his faults with critical poise. Hundreds of biographers are now competent to deal with Bach or Blake or Spinoza. But it took special gifts to lift these men from the company of mediocrity, for a misunderstood figure never looks misunderstood: he looks negligible or downright worthless.

Toward Berlioz the critical outlook has been changing for the last thirty years, largely owing to the writings of four Englishmen—Ernest Newman, W. J. Turner, Cecil Gray, and Tom S. Wotton. The present biographer of Berlioz, although he wrote before Wotton's and Turner's books appeared, faithfully reflects the changed attitude in his praise of many of Berlioz's works and of his "unique and many-sided genius." But it is not the allotment of praise and blame that makes a good or a bad book. It is the grasp of the whole personality of the artist, of the body of his work, of the times in which he lived, *as a whole*. Mr. Elliot confesses again and again that he is baffled; and by a not unnatural trick of self-deception he ascribes to his subject the contradictions and chaos which as a critic he has not been able to resolve.

The candor of this confession, together with the fact that the important writings previously mentioned were not known to him when he wrote, constitutes in fact the only excuse for the performance. Although it has been touted by a fellow-contributor to the series as the "long-awaited book on Berlioz," it is to be hoped that its inorganic construction, its lack of consistent standards, its frequent errors of fact and of typography will act as an antidote in the eyes of alert general readers. For the connoisseurs and scholars it will be enough to find recorded in the preface the author's "thanks to the editors of the Breitkopf and Härtel edition of Berlioz," which is equivalent to thanking Dr. Bowdler for his Family Shakespeare.

JACQUES BARZUN

Adventure in Awareness

PILGRIMAGE. By Dorothy Richardson. Volume I: *Pointed Roofs, Backwater, Honeycomb;* Volume II: *The Tunnel, Interim;* Volume III: *Deadlock, Revolving Lights, The Trap;* Volume IV: *Oberland, Dawn's Left Hand, Clear Horizon, Dimple Hill.* Alfred A. Knopf. $10.

IT WOULD appear, if the *Times* reviewer is an index to literary opinion, that Miss Richardson's extraordinary novel is fated to remain the caviar of a small and scattered group of devout Richardsonians and a mere mess of salty, sticky fish eggs to the general. And yet I am as convinced as I have ever been during the twenty years in which I have repeatedly pleaded for it that this author has only begun to find her proper audience. The fact that the novel has actually been brought out in four stout volumes more than two decades after the appearance of the first "chapter," as Miss Richardson calls each book, would point to a like conviction in other quarters. Publishers do not print books for the fun of the thing. The fun of the thing—if an adventure in awareness may be so described—is for the reader. I can only hope he will at last find it.

The first volume in the series was published in England in 1915. It had been completed two years earlier, and was thus contemporary with the appearance of the first part of Proust's life work and with Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." In her foreword the author mentions these experiments, and also glances briefly at such fellow-pilgrims toward realism as Balzac, Bennett, Henry James, and, without naming her, Virginia Woolf. She might, too, have mentioned May Sinclair, whose "Mary Olivier," published in 1919, is a condensed and somewhat vulgarized version of what Miss Richardson has done with exquisite subtlety on a major scale.

The special quality which distinguishes Miss Richardson from these writers is her emphasis upon the feminine consciousness. As a result she has been called, mistakenly, a feminist, or slighted, again mistakenly, as dealing in gossipy trivialities. What she has actually produced is the history of a woman's mind, in the fullest sense of that word, a history so intimate and penetrating that, were it not for the testimony of a few men—Frank Swinnerton, be it noted, along with Ford Madox Ford—one might suspect that only a woman could appreciate her performance.

It has been objected that the woman she chose to present is a person of small importance. She is a middle-class English girl who begins life, toward the close of the last century, in the serene setting of a comfortable suburban family, is early thrown upon her own resources, holds several jobs as a governess abroad and at home, settles down as a dental secretary in London, where she lives in a shabby boarding-house encountering other unimportant people and a scattering of not much more interesting intellectuals, has a holiday in Switzerland, and is last seen on her way to a retreat above Geneva, where she will presumably neither engage in any

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MARXISM DISINTEGRATING

(Communism, Socialism)

Radical errors in the foundation of a building go clear up to the roof and make the structure untenable. Such errors have existed in Marxism from the time of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). The movement, however, has influenced historians in giving a more just appraisal to economic factors of social evolution, and has been of assistance to city workers (but not the farming class) in their claim on life.

Marxism confuses economic fundamentals by attempting to put in the same category things of such unlike nature as a piece of industrial machinery (capital) and the square foot area whereon the machine rests. Thus, machinery and the ground which it occupies are called by Marx "instrumentalities of production" *(Communist Manifesto,* passim).

Marxism wrongly pictures modern government as resulting from the so-called "victory" of the *bourgeoisie* (capitalistic, business class), over the medieval ground landlord class; when, in fact, the modern democratic state is a political structure emerging from a long-drawn-out compromise whereby land was wholly or partly exempted from taxation, while the business and laboring classes, acquiring the right to vote, were saddled with increasing fiscal burdens.

As a result, the modern industrial system was put "on the spot" between the pressure of taxation and ground rent, *which must be liquidated, year by year, prior to the payment of wages,* thus reducing the buying power of the masses to absorb the products of industry and agriculture.

Marxism wrongly imagines a clear-cut, open-and-shut opposition between capital and labor; stressing class-war through which the proletariat evict, or expropriate, the bourgeoisie and establish the Workers' State by means of the "forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions" *(Communist Manifesto).* In picturing the evolution of the modern state, Marxism is wholly blind to the intervening manipulation of the Fiscal Power by the ground landlord interest, whereby land values are undertaxed and productive industry is overtaxed.

Marx therefore fails to comprehend modern democracy as an unstable political equilibrium in a process which blindly tends toward the liberation of productive industry and labor from ground monopoly by reversal of the tax-compromise between ground landlords and bourgeoisie.

After publishing "Capital" (1867) Marx continued to investigate economic history; and meanwhile, in a different economic sector, Henry George issued *Progress and Poverty* (1879), which has unfortunately given the general impression that its main theme is *land* as an exclusive subject of taxation. George, equally with Marx, had no conception of the democratic state as an unstable compromise between ground monopoly and the bourgeoisie. Hence the author of *Progress and Poverty* did not grasp the historic significance of his work as an item in the struggle to reverse that compromise, setting both capital and labor free from the grip of special privilege in land. He regarded democracy as a recovery instead of an achievement.

Marx accumulated material showing that prior to the machine age, the laboring masses of the people were flung off the soil of Europe by "enclosures," or plain stealing of common lands by the aristocracy; and that in overseas colonies founded by European nations, the mere ownership of machinery (or capital) conferred no power over labor unless the land and natural resources were monopolized and fenced away from the workers.

Marx by this time began to say, "For my part, I am no Marxist." His accumulated material was issued after his death as Volumes II and III of "Capital," approaching independently the standpoint of *Progress and Poverty,* whose author was maintaining a constant propaganda for taxation of land because its value was created by the growth of the community, and for exemption of capital equipment as "belonging sacredly to the individual." He thus exposed himself unnecessarily to Marxist critics, who pointed out that the individual owners of industrial machinery do not, from their own exertion, create the productive equipment which is legally theirs.

Henry George unconsciously avoided the problem of the concrete, historical origin of capital; and he would have been on impregnable ground if, instead of urging exemption of capital because it belongs to "the individual," he had claimed exemption for it as "the product of labor."

Marxism calls for "nationalization of land"; but Marxists inconsistently endorse taxation of ground rent and of unused land as a step in what they consider to be the onward march of their own doctrine; failing to realize that the correlative exemption of capital goods would necessarily deflect money and credit from speculative channels (especially speculation in land); while increasing the attractiveness of investment in productive machinery, merchandise and housing; the inevitable effect being to create a new demand for labor.

Disintegration of Marxism as a distinct movement is further shown by the recent *Handbook of Marxism* (Random House, N. Y.), which aims to be "most authoritative," and which takes material issued after the death of Marx relating to "expropriation of the agricultural population from the land," *naively placing it before the summary of "Capital," Vol. I, wherein the stress is upon machinery as the basis of "wage-slavery."*

(Solely responsible for the above statement: Louis Wallis, Kew Gardens, Long Island, New York. Free copies of this statement on request.)

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prodigious activity nor become the heroine of any profound private drama. It is a pre-war world, and though she meets such odd people as socialists, suffragettes, and even a Russian Jew (the one implausible character), her experiences belong to that remote and placid past. Where, then, is the interest? Where the significance? What, under the sun or moon, are these nineteen hundred-odd pages about?

The interest is in the incomparable intensity and richness with which the quality of given moments is presented. The significance is that of life itself, in the mere living. "Mere existence isn't life," one of her lovers says to Miriam Henderson, making the same objection that certain critics make of her creator's material. "Why mere?" she responds. "Most people have too much life and too little realization. Realization takes time and solitude. They have neither." And it is precisely realization that these volumes are about, that, in fact, they *are*. One of their values is that they leave the reader with a heightened awareness of the most unconsidered elements in his own daily experience. They perform the supreme service of literature, that of increasing consciousness, even when they seem to deal with trivia. They have the virtue Emily Dickinson ascribed to letters when she said: "A letter always feels to me like immortality because it is the mind alone without corporeal friend." That is, perhaps, the nature of all literature, even where, as here, it gives so fully the sense of the corporeal, substantial, commonplace universe. There is not much time. There is almost no solitude. But they are worth the effort of achieving, in order to share this adventure.

BABETTE DEUTSCH

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DRAMA

Woe to Israel!

FOR the third production of its subscription season the Theater Guild has chosen to offer an extremely elaborate production of Stefan Zweig's more or less Biblical tragedy "Jeremiah." To the general public, I am afraid, the name of that wrathful personage suggests little more than prophecies of woe as vague as they are terrible, but for the purposes of this drama Jeremiah has been completely rationalized and here appears as a philosophical pacifist whom none will honor until it is too late. The woe which he prophesies for Jerusalem is a woe which the Israelites bring upon themselves when they form an offensive alliance with the Egyptians, but it is also a woe which they might still have escaped had not the pride of their king, like the pride of modern rulers, preferred destruction to a loss of "national honor." Jeremiah is for peace before the war begins and for submission before it is over, but both the populace and its leaders are always one step behind him—ready for peace when it is too late for anything but submission and ready for submission only when even that can no longer save them.

According to a program note "Jeremiah" was written in Austria during the war and consciously intended as a purge for emotions which the author himself was finding intolerable. It expresses not only his convictions but, even more importantly I think, the sense which he had of being right yet powerless, a prophet who knew that he could not hope to be listened to until it was too late. Certainly the dramatic effectiveness of the play depends largely upon the situation in which the character finds himself rather than upon the actual events which take place; and the tragedy is less the tragedy of a defeated people than the tragedy of a man cursed with a knowledge and a wisdom which he knows must bring destruction upon himself while remaining useless to those before whom he cannot keep silent.

It must be obvious from even so brief an account as this that "Jeremiah" is hardly a gay piece, but it is somewhat more lively as well as a good deal more impressive than one might anticipate. However violent the "modernization" of the central character may be—and I leave the question to more competent judges—a credible background against which he can act is built up, and the expression often rises to genuine nobility. If the play does, nevertheless, lack the final touch of greatness which would make it thrilling rather than merely impressive, the fact may be in part due to the very immediacy of its relevance both to the conditions under which it was written and to the author's own mental state. There is still something to be said for passion recollected in tranquillity. Passion without tranquillity is likely to result either in unrestrained violence or, as in this case, in a restraint so carefully imposed that one gets at times a sense of artificiality and self-consciousness. Mr. Zweig seems to know almost too well what his play means and why the various utterances are significant.

The production has been beautifully directed by Worth-

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ington Miner and staged with a lavishness which seems to imply a greater confidence in its potential popularity than I fear the event will justify. Kent Smith is excellent as the prophet, Arthur Byron perhaps even better as the troubled King Zedekiah who finds it "terrible to serve a God whom no man has ever seen and who is always silent." But I am afraid that a public which would probably find the play too unrelievedly somber for its taste even if it came into the theater will even more probably be kept away by a title still more forbidding than the performance it is used to designate.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"The Gentle People" (Belasco), subtitled A Brooklyn Fable, falls between the two stools of allegory and simple realism. As the matter-of-fact story of two ordinary people who turn upon their gangster-tormentor and murder him without being caught, it is not convincing, for at several points its action becomes symbolic rather than actual, and the ending itself is arbitrary. On the other hand, the realism of most of its scenes fails to sustain any overtone of allegory. The main fault lies in the writing; but the Hollywood acting of Franchot Tone, Sylvia Sidney, and Sam Jaffe only emphasizes the faults of the play. M. M.

FILMS

"IDIOT'S DELIGHT" (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) and "One-Third of a Nation" (Paramount), the two latest Hollywood offerings of importance, have certain common features which seem to indicate that in some quarters the movie industry is entering a new phase. Both pictures aspire to be taken seriously aside from box-office considerations. Both dare to base their stories on important contemporary themes full of dynamite. Both compromise between the urge to tell a piece of truth and the use of the old tricks of make-believe and pseudo-entertainment which have been so successful on a lower level. And both avoid the deeper implications of the chosen theme: they carry messages, but the producers are still afraid to announce them openly. Considered from the point of view of moving-picture art, both wear the marks of dilettantism, yet to the eye tired of the normal run of merchandise they offer, at least in spots, an experience.

Robert E. Sherwood, author of the stage play "Idiot's Delight," in which the personalities of Lynne Fontanne and Alfred Lunt overcame the pervading phoniness of the vehicle, prepared the movie script himself, and there are no essential differences. He prefixed a long sequence showing the first meeting of Irene, the ever-pretending lady (Norma Shearer), and Harry, the small-time vaudeville performer (Clark Gable), on a stage in Omaha. This sequence is in itself a little picture, true, witty, unsentimental, with moments of poetry, especially in the central dinner scene. From this excellent opening, which provides amusing byplay later on, the script jumps to the scene and theme of the original. Irene has became in the meantime the mistress of the war-mongering munitions maker; Harry is touring the back countries of Europe with his blondes. The two meet again in a hotel on a

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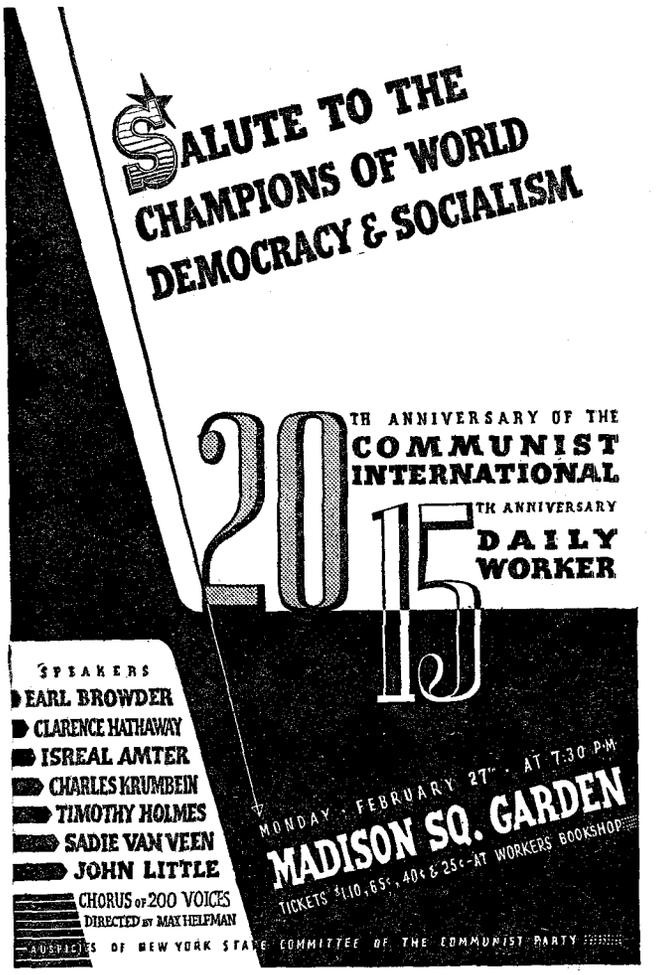
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mountain frontier, where a handful of people are forced to stay, since the frontier is closed and the outbreak of the much-talked-of war imminent. The military is already in command. A tremendous air field with underground hangars, easily and comfortably visible from the terraces of the hotel, suggests the physical dangers of war and serves to fill with elemental threats the many gaps between genuine psychological intensities. (Remember the war atmosphere of "Grand Illusion," achieved without a rifle, not to speak of bombers?)

The anti-war talk is subdued, the emphasis being switched to the personal affairs of the co-stars—Miss Shearer is even more pretentious than her pretentious part. Burgess Meredith as the anti-war fanatic gets little chance to arouse the audience, but still the impact of the impending war comes through in spite of the tendency to play it down. In particular Joseph Schildkraut, as the taciturn military commander, conveys by means of gestures of understatement what war means. I have no complaint to make about the inserted happy ending; on the contrary. The essential theme having been diluted with much cheap comedy, which is not even used to sharpen the situation through contrast, a tragic ending would only have added to the falseness of the whole. Nevertheless, there are sequences in the picture that are mature, earnest, and clean. And one could sense how the audience was arrested by these moments, how the usual passive interest was suddenly raised to intense feeling.

"One-Third of a Nation" uses the name and some of the material of the Federal Theater Project's "Living Newspaper," which presented so vividly the history of housing. The moving-picture version is wisely limited to the slums of New York in the present era. It pictures with great skill the misery of the poor and the firetraps they live in. But it adds to scenes which are true to life in every detail a dreadful love story.

A rich playboy (Leif Erikson), young, blond, the forceful polo-player type, passes a tenement fire on his way to his hydroplane in the East River. He stops, picks up a little boy who has fallen from a loose fire escape, and takes him to the hospital. He is appalled by the conditions in the slums, and when the little boy's sister (Sylvia Sidney) remarks that the owner of these neglected houses should be sent to prison he adds, "Or worse." Of course he finds out, after flying home to his Long Island estate, that he himself is the owner whom he has condemned.

His conscience awakened, he wants to do something. He appears voluntarily at the District Attorney's investigation—an excellent scene in which the social system becomes more and more the defendant with every question; he promises the poor boy's sister that he will rebuild the infected and rickety tenement houses. But it takes a second fire in which more people are burned to death to complete his education. Finally he has the houses torn down and wins the girl—an ending which one saw coming all along.

"One-Third of a Nation," like "Idiot's Delight," represents an advance in the choice of theme; it is spoiled in the same fashion by superimposed clichés and the producers' fear of their own courage. The problem which lies at the root of the difficulty is of course the well-known dilemma: how to tell the truth without being radical.

FRANZ HOELLERING

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Letters to the Editors

Mussolini on Race

Dear Sirs: A dispatch from Berlin to the New York *Times* of January 26 quotes Roberto Farinacci as saying that Mussolini had realized "the race problem in its true significance in 1919." One must take careful note of the occasion which brought forth this misstatement from Italy's foremost anti-Semite. He was speaking from the same platform as Julius Streicher and attempting to match his Duce with Streicher's Führer. He wished to show that even though no consciousness of a Jewish menace had appeared in Italy prior to the formation of the Rome-Berlin axis, and though it took the government until February, 1938, to work up some enthusiasm for an anti-Semitic campaign, Mussolini had as early as 1919 made a note of racial theories and probably filed it away with other far-fetched but potentially useful political devices.

All of this the Duce kept to himself. A study of the rise of Italian fascism shows that, far from wishing to divide the Italian people into races, its one purpose was to unite them. In a speech at Trieste in 1921 Mussolini declared, "I have enormous faith in the future greatness of the Italian people. Ours is the most homogeneous of the peoples of Europe."

Luigi Villari, the Fascist historian, wrote in 1929, "The population of Italy, although showing considerable varieties of type, is more homogeneous than the superficial observer might imagine. It is, of course, made up of elements of divers origins, but what great nation is not?" "The makers of Italian unity," states this Fascist historian, "realized the great importance of welding the nation together and making of it one united people." Can it be that Mussolini has not read Villari?

In 1932 the Duce himself told Emil Ludwig that "anti-Semitism does not exist in Italy." He even went so far as to say, "Of course there are no pure races left; not even the Jews have kept their blood unmingled. Successful crossings have often promoted the energy and the beauty of a nation." Then came that familiar, oft-quoted statement of Mussolini's, "Race! It is feeling, not a reality; 95 per cent, at least, is a feeling." FLORENCE JONAS

New York, January 31

Costly Lesson

Dear Sirs: It is said that learning by experience is effective but unpleasant. It is also expensive. Perhaps in the year 1960 we shall all know that suppression of international traffic in munitions impels every government to set up and keep at work munitions factories sufficient not only for peace-time needs but for emergencies, and delivers the non-militaristic nations as a prey to the militaristic. But it looks as if the world might pay a heavy tuition fee for the lesson.

And when we have learned it we shall forget that at the beginning of the movement to suppress the traffic we were warned that the suppression was bound to work out to such results. We shall believe that those who learned these facts by sad experience were the first to discover them.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON

Ballard Vale, Mass., January 26

Smoking and Health

Dear Sirs: In a recent issue you state that newspapers did not give publicity to a report of a professor of Johns Hopkins University on the effects of smoking. A public service will be effected if *The Nation* will publish a summary of that report. H. SHEMIN

New York, February 8

[A report of Dr. Pearl's survey appeared in *Science* for March 4, 1938. Based on 6,813 case histories it was designed to determine whether smoking shortens life. It concluded: "The tables show that smoking is associated with definite impairment of longevity. This impairment is proportional to the habitual amount of tobacco usage in smoking, being great for heavy smokers and less for moderate smokers. The moderate smokers' lives are definitely shorter than those of the total abstainers."—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Praise from Cuba

Dear Sirs: Please permit me to congratulate your staff on the clean and decent campaign your paper has been conducting in behalf of democracy in Spain. Your last article by Louis Fischer was masterful in its exactness and its insight into the situation. It was among the best things I have read on Spain.

It is refreshing to know that papers like *The Nation* are being published in America. The debt we republicans of Spain owe you is immense, but I believe that you are paid by the satisfaction you experience in doing a brilliant and honorable work. I read your paper not only for information on the war in Spain but for general orientation on the problems of Europe and America. I believe *The Nation* is serving a fundamental purpose in America: to keep men of good faith together and bring hope to those of us who think—perhaps naively—that the world can still be made a decent place. ANTONIO J. COLORADO

Havana, Cuba, February 1

Unbalanced Biology

Dear Sirs: Dr. Darby's review of "Animals Without Backbones" in your issue of January 21 descends into a diatribe on the author's omission of the topic of genetics and on the unbalance in departments of biology in American universities, and fails to mention points surely of greater interest to the readers of *The Nation*. For a correct evaluation of Dr. Buchsbaum's book, it is necessary to know that it is one of the series of textbooks written and illustrated from a new standpoint of student interest—and reader interest—especially for the undergraduate courses at the University of Chicago. "Animals Without Backbones" takes its place with Croneis's "Down to Earth," Romer's "Man and the Vertebrates," and Carlson and Johnson's "Machinery of the Body." Thus we may reasonably expect a companion volume for the important field of genetics, and Dr. Darby's criticism of the omission of genetics from the work at hand is beside the mark. It should not be necessary to remind him that genetics is represented at the University of Chicago by so significant a leader as Sewall Wright.

In point of fact, the new treatment in "Animals Without Backbones" and the companion volume, "Man and the Vertebrates," exhibits a trend toward a more balanced biological teaching program. The shoe of unbalance in biological teaching is actually on the other foot. It is precisely the overemphasis on genetics

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and on the experimental departments of biology in general which has produced a situation in which the educated public is more familiar with the electron than with the gene. The neglect in universities of the foundation for a popular understanding of biology, namely, the systematic framework with its inexhaustibly interesting natural history of plants and animals, is the direction in which unbalance is a serious portent.

KARL P. SCHMIDT,
Field Museum of National History

Chicago, January 25

Will You Fight?

Dear Sirs: For the last twenty years I have been asking Mr. Villard the same question. He has not answered it yet. I may have better luck this time; here it is again:

If you adopt against an aggressor nation certain "measures short of war"; if these measures prove so effective that the aggressor nation will actually be hampered by them; if the aggressor nation sends you an ultimatum to withdraw those measures or fight; what will you do?

ALBERT GUÉRARD

Stanford University, Cal., February 1

Never!

Dear Sirs: My answer to Professor Guérard is that I should never fight under any circumstances, believing that the day we fight we destroy the American democracy. And I should not withdraw any non-intercourse or boycott measures to which any dictator country might object. I have not answered Professor Guérard before because I object to answering hypothetical—"iffy"—questions. His is an uncalled-for question now if only because neither Germany nor Japan nor Italy, the so-called aggressor nations, could make war upon us whatever we did to them.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

New York, February 9

Paris and Barcelona

Dear Sirs: On January 18, 40,000 French men and women crowded into the Vel d'Hiver to plead for the opening of the Spanish frontier. The fall of Barcelona was imminent, but the meeting would not admit it. Franco had taken Tarragona, but resistance was stiffening. The debate on foreign affairs in the Chamber was just under way. There was yet hope. There was yet time to help.

These 40,000 men and women were the Frenchmen who work hard for their *sous,* who can afford only an occasional *coup de rouge* at the nearest zinc counter, who have been battered by the tremendous upswing in price of the very necessities of life. They were the ones—and how well they know it—who will march in case of war, and they want to be sure that they are asked to fight for something in which they believe. Not for M. Bonnet, Lazard Frères, the City of London, or the sacred stupidities of the Cliveden set.

This meeting was ignored. As a lever on the Chamber it had no great direct effect. The debate was postponed; Bonnet, it was reported, threatened to resign if "non-intervention" was thrown over. London backed Bonnet, and Daladier gave in. Meanwhile Franco was fast approaching Barcelona.

One week later, ninety-five American soldiers, ragged in clothing and empty of stomach, left Spain behind them and crossed into Cerbère. They arrived in Paris shortly before noon the next day. As they stepped from the train to buy fruit, sandwiches, and beer and exhaust the station's supply of *Ce Soir,* a crowd slowly gathered outside the iron gates of the quai. These soldiers were a group of young men. Many of them, despite their makeshift clothing and their unshaven faces, could have strolled off a nearby college campus. But there was nothing collegiate in what they said or in what they were thinking. As the train pulled out, one remarked: "We're leaving one fight, but we're entering another." In the United States their presence will be felt.

And then came the final Chamber debate, the culmination of two weeks in which the press had spoken of little else but Spain and the oncoming "pressure" or "blackmail" of Italy and Germany, two weeks in which anxious groups of Frenchmen had formed noiselessly around street corners reading a manifesto signed by a group of leading French intellectuals urging immediate aid to Republican Spain. Daladier delivered a straightforward and impressive appeal. It was moving because Daladier loves his country, and he put sharply what Bonnet could not: France will not permit *atteinte* to her soil or possessions. On that point there was unanimity in the Chamber.

Tonight, despite the vote, despite the deputies' announced determination to stand fast against direct threat, there is little rejoicing in France. Thirty-five persons were arrested on the *grands boulevards* tonight for demonstrating for Republican Spain. French, American, and British committees are working overtime to raise money, to alleviate the misery and despair along the Spanish border.

Daladier met the challenge to his position; but he met it partially because France, with its paucity of real leaders, would not know where to turn in case of another real Cabinet crisis. Daladier is no admirer of Bonnet, he would like to replace him as soon as possible,—when the present crisis appears less threatening. Until he does, France cannot expect to enjoy great peace of mind.

FRANCIS G. SMITH, JR.

Paris, January 27

CONTRIBUTORS

KEITH HUTCHISON, formerly on the London staff of the *Herald Tribune,* is now an associate editor of *The Nation.*

GAETANO SALVEMINI, author of "The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy" and "Under the Axe of Fascism," is now teaching at Harvard.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, coauthor with H. C. Engelbrecht of "Merchants of Death," recently returned from an extensive tour of Europe.

MAXWELL S. STEWART has just completed a revision of his book "Social Security" to cover recent developments.

CONSTANCE ROURKE is the author of "Audubon," "Davy Crockett," and, most recently, "Charles Sheeler."

LOUIS B. SALOMON is a member of the English Department of Brooklyn College.

HANS KOHN is professor of modern European history at Smith College.

JACQUES BARZUN is assistant professor of history at Columbia University.

BABETTE DEUTSCH is the author of "This Modern Poetry" and of numerous volumes of poems.

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